

First UU Congregation of Ann Arbor-

Historical Information Compiled by 'History Detectives' 2014-2015, for our 150th anniversary celebration year. Some of this information was used for "mini-history" presentations and stories in the "Voices" collection.

Most of the information in this document was collected by Marion Holt and Eppie Potts, who researched UUA archives of annual reports and board meeting minutes. Thank you Eppie & Marion!

FACTOIDS.....

In the early 70's Sara and Bruce Gibb facilitated the creation of Extended Families. Because many people are far from their biological families these groups were and are useful. The families were meant to be smallish multi-generational organizations of congregants for social purposes. Two families are still meeting.

FUNDS-----

1982 - ENDOWMENT FOR LIBERAL CHURCH was a fund started with a donation by member Stan Erikson in 1982. The funds were matched by congregant contributions up to \$10,000 and meant to be used for building repairs and grounds keeping.

VALERIE ESTRY YOUTH OPPORTUNITY FUND was established by her father, Hal Estry. The purpose was to support a youth attending the Lake Geneva conference.

20th CENTURY ENDOWMENT FUND was started by Charles and Jeanette Kramer with \$20,000 in 1999. To be used when other contributions reach \$100,000 for any church purposes or expense.

KEN PHIFER was awarded emeritis status in January 2006. He was cited for his many contributions to the Ann Arbor community Including Interfaith Round Table and other activities relating to the spread of peace and non violence, aid in dying and transgender concerns.

SEARCH COMMITTEE for a new minister after the 25 year service of Ken Phifer was formed in January 2006. Marshall Shearer, Don Anderson, Bob Hosparaduk, Lisa Lemble, Karen Gates, Renee Peschek and Fran Lyman were members.

125th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION committee was formed in 1988 to make plans for the event in May 1990. Events included a celebration dinner, video tapes of members recollections and a visit from Bill Schulz, head of UUA who gave the keynote address.

SINGLETARIANS, a social group composed of middle aged singles, operated for 15 years. They produced bylaws in 1984. Regular events included cinema, eat-outs, parties and dances.

1984 WOMEN'S GROUPS contained 35 women in 1984. They met in homes, sponsored a retreat, presented a congregational service and offered support and discussion topics.

1985 EAST SIDE DROP IN CENTER available for children in the church building in 1985 for two mornings/week. Average attendance was 25 children per session. The fee was \$1/child/session. Parents were involved on the Board of the Drop in Center.

GUILD HOUSE, AN ECUMENICAL CAMPUS MINISTRY- Located in a house near the University of Michigan was partially supported with monies and volunteers from UUAA who served On their Board. Open to students, faculty and staff, discussions on ethical concerns and social events were held.

YOUNG ADULT GROUP was operating in 1986 to teens to mid 30's. They met for recreational events, entertainment, and social purposes.

ROUND ROBIN dinners were held in people's homes once/mo. The goal is to facilitate greater contact between members.

MINISTERIAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE was operating in 1987 to act as a channel to the minister for issues and concerns about the church. Members could use the committee as a sounding board. They met monthly. Committees were discontinued during interim ministry after Ken Phifer left in 2006.

ADULT FORUMS were held each Sunday starting from September to June. Speakers were invited to talk on a variety of topics such as health care, travel, psychology, international events. In 1988 Helen Graves was chair.

LES AMIS, a volunteer support group was reactivated in 1985 after a fallow period. Its agenda was to visit, make phone calls and send cards to those experiencing loss or other difficulties.

HOST FAMILY PROJECT- In 1961 Edie Pelz wrote about the project which gathered UU Families who agreed to host an international student or scholar once/month in a family setting.

MEN' CLUB

In 1962 Ray Kehoe reported that on the Men's club activities including a lunch at the Westener

EVENING WOMEN's GROUP

In 1961 Maret Wilson reported on the activities of this group as they participated in cleaning projects in the building and raising monies for various cosmetic upgrades.

CALLING IRWIN GAEDE AS MINISTER

In 1952 Irwin Gaede was called by a 93% affirmative vote to be the new minister.

MINISTERIAL INTERN PROGRAM

In 1959-60 , Don Meyer served as a ministerial intern. He was active in youth groups, addressed several sermons and met with young adults.

MERGER WITH UNIVERSALISTS

In 1959 the Congregation moved by a 2/3rd majority to merge with the Universalist churches. This was in accord with a nationwide movement

MINISTER ED REDMAN RESIGNED

In 1960 Redman left for a sister church in Arlington. When he came here the church was virtually depleted of members and funds. When he left membership included 250 families and greatly enlarged quarters.

CHURCH COUNCIL

In 1957 Ms. Gerald Bailey reported on the functioning of the Church Council which serves as an intergroup committee between new areas of program and works to establish friendly relation with newcomers.

DEDICATION OF NEW SANCTUARY

In 1957 ceremonies were held for the dedication of the new addition to the 1917 Washtenaw church which served as its sanctuary upstairs, social hall downstairs.

LAYMEN'S LEAGUE

In 1957 Walter Shipman wrote about a group of men who meet once/month for varied programs. They are investigating the possibility of assisting in the formation of a Unitarian Fellowship.

STUDENT GROUP

In 1957 this group was active with weekly meetings to acquaint new students with us. Reverend Redman spoke to them of the liberal's religion. They also had joint meetings with other student religious groups.

DIRECTORY ESTABLISHED

In 1957 A committee was formed with Gloria Terhune as Chair and assembled a booklet of families who agreed to participate in a directory.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

In 1948 The church school, as reported by Dr. Wayne Whitaker, had 70 children in classes with an average attendance of about 50. The big increase in small children is taxing the facilities. In 1959 the Trustees purchased, using Endowment Funds ,the property at 2007 Washtenaw with the hope of developing a future RE center there.

1973-- DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION Rachel Kinley reported in 1973 that 180 parents with children are using the RE program. A survey was used to get input about improving the RE.

1964 Don MacMullin of the PROPERTY ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE reported that numerous fixes and improvements in some design features Were accomplished on the aging, trouble ridden building on Washtenaw.

100 YEAR CENTENNIAL was celebrated in 1965 and included a keynote speech by UUAA President Dana Greeley. It included a gathering of former ministers Ed Redman and Harold Marley and a pot luck dinner. The history of the church was reviewed.

A DAY NURSERY was operating in 1966 offering care for about 25 four year old 5 mornings a week. Seven mothers assisted. Officers of the board included President Mrs. Bruce Hill

A GIFTS COMMITTEE was formed in 1968 for the purpose of accepting or rejecting various gifts. Milt Kemnitz and Richard Wilt, both local artists were involved. Nancy Abbott was chair of the Committee.

SPLIT IN THE CONGREGATION occurred in 1969-70. Some members were unhappy with Dr. Erwin Gaede and his vigorous stand again the Vietnam War . A vote was taken to keep him. Dissenters formed a Fellowship, which still exists in 2014.

LAND ACQUISITION FUND had been established with the hope of moving the church. But in 1970 it was abandoned and the money returned to parishioners or used for renovation of present building.

SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE under leadership of Irene Oliver and Robert Taylor were chairs in 1970. They offered 3 public programs and also made donations to local charities.

UU SERVICE COMMITTEE in 1973 under the leadership of Shirley Daly offered Christmas Cards for sale in the church. This practice, using UNICEF cards was continued by Pat Runyon.

DENOMINATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE IN 1972 chaired by Art and Mac Poinier worked to encourage members to attend UUA General Assembly and to cultivate other opportunities for UU experiences outside the church.

AN INVESTMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE makes recommendations to the Board of Trustee for discussion and decisions on the investment of special funds, In 1977 Marge Reade was co-chair.

THE WORSHIP COMMITTEE encouraged members to give a Sunday Service once/month. Some of the topics included The Authentic Person, Celebration of Aging and Meaning of Love. Joyce Dunstan was chair in 1977.

FRIDAY NOONERS operated in 1978 to meet for lunch and a program. Long time members reviewed the history of the church. Jan Erikson was chair.

WOMEN'S ALLIANCE

Met at church the first Friday of the month. In 1963 Joyce Jones reported that they held a rummage and book sale and gave the profits for the church kitchen..

IN 2005 THE UU BUILDING WAS DECLARED SMOKE FREE

In addition alcoholic beverages, were restricted to wine, champagne and beer allowed under terms of rental agreement.

In 1998 The UU NEWS newsletter was put on the web site.

A new, reorganized UU WEBSITE was established in 2001 and was maintained by the Communication Committee. Privacy guidelines were established.

In 1996 A POLICY ABOUT POLITICAL ANNOUNCEMENTS was established. Partisan political statement were banned from newsletters, printed announcements and Celebration of Life Services. This did not negate discussion of partisan policies In other venues.

In 2004 JOYS AND SORROWS was eliminated and announcements, programs, activities, etc would be issued as a separate sheet in the Order of Service.

In 2007 STONE SWEAT LODGE operations were regulated by Board policy.

In 1998 THE UU NEWS reported that the Boy Scouts of America have disallowed UU's to receive the Religion of Life badge. They claimed that our version of religion is inconsistent with scouting values and that we have trouble regarding duty to God.

In 1998 A UU BOUTIQUE WAS HELD as one of an annual event. Participants hand-made items are for sale and proceeds benefit the general fund.

In 1994 ROUND ROBIN DINNERS were very popular and Cal Michael reported that 140 people participated that year.

In 1993 A BLACK CONCERNS COMMITTEE was established. Their agenda included the Kwanza celebration, holding a class "Open the Door", and introducing some black traditions and culture.

In 1989 THE APPLACHIAN SERVICE PROJECT, garnered many participants from the congregation. They traveled to a designated area to repair homes of low income owners. Eric Erikson reported that 3 adults, 3 young adults and 23 youth participated in Virginia that year.

In 1994 CROP/HUNGER WALK drew UU participants, as reported By Dorothy Wilson. It is a community interfaith walk that collect pledges for supporting relief of local hunger. 35 adults and some school children took part that year.

In 1994 INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY was in operation, as reported by Jerry Lafeber. 2-5 homeless families we helped with food, lodging and other services for four non consecutive weeks/year. 15 congregants helped.

In 1995 A FACILITIES GROUP was formed to consider church relocation with chair Ovid Pomerleau. Subcommittee tasks were: Coordinate all activities, identify money sources, provide guidelines for use of a new building site and maintain communication with the Board and the congregants.

In 1995 Sarah Albright reported on the MUSIC PROGRAM, citing 40 members of the adult choir who performed ten times. The Junior choir of about 14 singers performed six times for the service.

In 1995 THE CARING COMMITTEE, chaired by Julie Dybdahl and Lucy Leist reported that their activities included visitation of homebound congregants and those in nursing homes. They also arrange memorial services and provide transportation to church services.

In 1995 A SUBSIDY FOR A MINISTERIAL STUDENT at Harvard Divinity School was given to help the family of Bob Gerschick.

1996 An ADULT SENIORS GROUP led by Joan August and Ginger Papania held meetings twice/mo on Sundays for discussion and outings.

In 1999 The Social Action Comm joined a national coalition for the ABOLISHMENT OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS. A petition drive netted 127 congregants on a resolution

In 1999 THE UU SERVICE COUNCIL of the church held an involvement fair, as Reported by Meg Lynch. The purpose was to acquaint congregants about worldwide programs sponsored by UUSC.. Guest at your table boxes that year netted \$1,000.

In 1999 A FOOD DONATION PROGRAM was operating under the guidance of Margie Teall. Participants bring in non-perishables on Sunday which are distributed to organization that support those at risk.

In 1999 OUR PARTNER CHUCH IN ROMANIA , as reported by Marina Brown received a 'CARE' package from us. Ken Phifer organized a trip to visit them. The partnership helps build relationships with others whose cultural ways may be different from ours.

In 1999 THE CHALICE RELAY, coordinated by Sandy Simon, was completed after the last service at 1917 Washtenaw. 200 people carried the wooden chalice in a relay fashion for 6.5 miles to our new building.

In 1999 The ARCHIVES OF CHURCH RECORDS, under the direction of Tim Richards were organized and stored in a locked closet in the library. Many papers of our history were transferred to the University of Michigan Bentley Historical Library.

In 1999 A SERVICE OF DEDICATION for our new building was held May 16. UU Minister Mark Belletini of Columbus, Ohio preached a sermon. The architects and builder were recognized as well as Bill Tyler and Marty Elder for their managerial skills.

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In 2001 A LAND USE COMMITTEE, as reported by Kyle Connolly completed a conceptual plan for our land in addition to gardening and outside construction tasks. Future plans were announced.

In 2003 GREEN SANCTUARY, as reported by Jeff Polinar, our church applied to the UU Green Sanctuary Program for recognition of our building as a Green Church. The goals include raising consciousness about environmental issues.

In 2002 The congregation endorsed the work of the ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN COMMITTEE on a Religious Education Building. Guiding principles for design as well as energy use were outlined as well as site plan. Don Anderson and Bill Tyler reporting.

In 2006 THE MINISTERIAL SEARCH committee was established by vote with congregants Marshall Shearer, Karen Gates, Renee Peschek, Don Anderson, Bob Hospaderek, Lisa Lemble and Fran Lyman.

A more organized gift committee morphed into PLANNED GIVING by 1994. Workshops were given covering charitable gifts and a newsletter, FORESIGHT , issued. Those who made a pledge became the Sunderland Society , In 2012 there were 56 members enrolled.
