

UUFM *BLASTS* FROM THE PAST

Celebrating 70 Years as a Fellowship

Has our Fellowship always been in this location?

At the very beginning, in 1952, members met in each other's homes. The congregation held meetings at 114 Pohl Road from 1961 until February 13, 2005 when we caravanned to our new building at 937 Charles Avenue.

When have we made physical improvements to our buildings?

In 1980, the members of UUFM decided to add a meeting space on to the old farmhouse at 114 Pohl Road, including new handicapped-accessible rest rooms and a new entryway. This addition was dedicated on September 15, 1980. On September 8, 2004, a special congregational meeting was held to approve the terms and conditions of a purchase agreement that the Space Committee successfully negotiated for the Victory Life property that we now enjoy! During the worship service on February 13, 2005, our new quarter-time minister, Rev. Lisa Friedman, led a caravan of vehicles from our Pohl Road home to our new home on Charles Avenue. During 2015, our new entry and office space, along with our lift, were added to help make our home welcoming and accessible to all.

Fall 1952: Our Beginnings

In the fall of 1952 (as reported in the February 1963 newsletter), 20 people attended a meeting held in the Saulpaugh Hotel, called by Monroe Husbands, Director of Fellowship Units of the American Unitarian Association of Boston. As a result, our first recorded public meeting was held on Tuesday, Jan. 20, 1953, at the Northern States Power Company auditorium. Arthur Foote addressed the group on the subject of "Humanism and Theism in Liberal Religion." Annual dues for the first year were \$1.00, with expenditures for the year projected at \$132.75, ending with a balance of \$3.25!

September 1988: Beginning our Pathway to Full-Time Ministry

This newsletter announced UUFM's first professional leadership with the hiring of Lee Green, a second year student at United Theological Seminary in New Brighton. Lee was hired to conduct one service a month and help get our religious education program off to a good start. Read the comments from the President at the time, Sandra Tanner- now Sandra Walberg: "With the hiring of a part time minister, we will have assistance in clarifying focus, maintaining priorities, knowing about and connecting with other resources. There will also be a much needed support system for those who do the ongoing work of the Fellowship, from the complex long range and program planning, through the many steps that are needed to implement those plans, as well as keeping records, getting out the newsletter, the Sunday bulletin, and caring for the building. This step toward professional leadership has been a large undertaking. As with the beautiful addition to our building, it seems that we have courageously reached out into the unknown to plant a foot and turn a corner, so that we might see and follow some new directions. The directions we have chosen for the forthcoming year are to develop a strong religious education program for children, to offer also some adult educational programming, to increase our membership and to expand our overall outreach to the community."

September 1989: Beginnings of a UUFM Choir

A Music Subcommittee was formed as part of the Program/Worship Committee. Ann Rae Anderson also volunteered to start a choir which would perform periodically and assist in hymn singing.

September 1990: Marriage Announced!

This newsletter announced that Kathy Vos and Greg Abbott (members both then and now!) were getting married that month! Congratulations on 32 years of marriage, Kathy and Greg!

September 2004: Voting to Approve the Purchase of 937 Charles Avenue

On September 8, 2004, a special congregational meeting was held to approve the terms and conditions of a purchase agreement that the Space Committee successfully negotiated for the Victory Life property that we now enjoy!

September 2005: More Growth in Music

Our Grand Piano fundraising began. Contributors donated \$175 to have their name written on a key on a large keyboard sign. Lower contributions were gladly accepted. Our Ebony polish Kawai was described as “a precision instrument capable of translating the subtle expressions of the soul into the language of music.” Our piano was delivered the week of October 17, 2005, in time for our building dedication later that month. Musicians, singers, and listeners have been enjoying the beauty of this instrument ever since!

Your 70th Anniversary Celebration Team