

HISTORY OF THE UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP OF SASKATOON



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1955-81

By

Pat Adams, Gail McConnell, and others

Edited by Carl von Baeyer

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Unitarian Fellowship of Saskatoon
502 Main Street
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 0C1

Affiliated with the Canadian Unitarian Council
and the Unitarian universalist Association.

- This Fellowship proposes to uphold the freedom, brotherhood, and equal rights of mankind regardless of race, color, creed; to seek the truth, believing that the past must always prove itself anew and that a living religion must change as thought advances and must be free to grow;
- To respect in each other, and in all, the authority of the individual conscience and the freedom of the mind, holding that the human spirit is most truly guided from within;
- To strive through study to discover the principles of religion, through thought to better our personal lives, and through action to help others according to their needs.

INTRODUCTION

Through twenty-five successive years
It's scarcely shrunk nor grown ...

... sings Mike Wilson in his irreverent "Psalm for the Twenty-Fifth" reproduced at the end of this History.

But in that quarter-century many hundreds of people have grown through their association with the Unitarian Fellowship of Saskatoon. Most have arrived, stayed for a few years, and then, enriched with music, thoughtful discussion, and a sense of spiritual refreshment, have moved on to other forms of fellowship. Though this has so far kept the Fellowship more or less static in size, it has been far from sedentary in its program. As this history demonstrates, the Fellowship's attention has roved over the religious, the historical, the scientific, the aesthetic, the international, the philanthropic — it has celebrated life with reason and passion.

The History consists of three parts, each bearing the stamp of its creator. Part I is a chronological account of the pioneering years of the Fellowship from its beginnings in a 1955 meeting between Bill Etches and Garth Buhler. This section is scripturally authentic, being written before 1961, and its authorship is unknown.

Part II, written by Pat Adams, is a thematically arranged biography of the Fellowship from its founding to 1975. She thoughtfully and thoroughly traces the development of the Fellowship's several homes, its religious education programs, its contacts with ministers, and its varied endeavours in the field of social action.

Part III, written in 1981 by Gail McConnell, returns to a chronological format for reporting on the years 1971 to 1981, a format which future Fellowship historians will no doubt find convenient for keeping this story up to date. These highly readable summaries are frequently enlivened by Gail's piquant wit. The reader will also appreciate her perception of the real events underlying the minutes and *Challenge* stories which were her main source.

Thanks are extended to the authors of Part I, to Pat and Gail, to members of the Fellowship who read and commented on a draft of the History (Frank Coburn, June Bantjes, Pat Adams, Ann Coxworth), and most of all to the Fellowship itself, for the rich contributions to our lives which are chronicled in this book.

Carl von Baeyer
September, 1981

PART 1-1955-59

1955-56

It all started in October of 1955. A young couple who had no particular religious affiliation with any local church but were unaware of such a religion as Unitarianism, read with interest an article in the October Liberty magazine which described perfectly their ideas of religion and went on to give a few interesting highlights of the religion known as Unitarianism. This couple set to work to find if such a religious group existed locally but were unable to find a trace of Unitarianism. A hastily despatched letter to the minister of the Toronto Unitarian Church mentioned in the article failed to bring forth further information. The husband, in desperation, took a trip to Winnipeg, Manitoba to try to find some answers through the Church there. He was very well received by its Minister, Philip Petursson and the members of the congregation and went home with a new determination to form such a group in Saskatoon.

Philip Petursson in the meantime wrote to the head of the Church of the Larger Fellowship in Boston, Massachusetts who in turn started the wheels in motion by sending the names of known Unitarians in the Saskatoon district along with an encouraging letter. This letter finally resulted in the historic meeting of the original members of this Fellowship, Bill Etches and Garth Buhler, on a day between Christmas and New Year of 1955. It was a stimulating meeting of two new found friends but still did not produce any set organizational plan. The next meeting two weeks later saw the duo increased by Charlotte MacDonell (soon to become Mrs. Etches) and Edna Buhler. These meetings occurred fortnightly during January and February with no new additions until early March when Boston sent us the names of Mr. and Mrs. Ed Cocks (now Carleton) and soon they were within our little circle of would be Unitarians along with newcomer Clark Shea. In April of 1956, it was felt that it was time to insert an advertisement in the *Star Phoenix* to try to seek further like-minded people in Saskatoon. Alas—our advertisement brought but four replies and no new members.

Following this, and on a hunch, Mavis Cocks phoned the Editor of the *Star Phoenix* and asked him if he would give us a free plug in the paper and on the Saturday night a very small item appeared *in* the I See column which advised the people of Saskatoon that an organizational meeting was to be held the following Wednesday at 826-5th Street. Around this time we heard several amusing stories of the ‘Strong’ Unitarian movement in this city and all seven of us found this a great inspiration to carry on the fight. As a result of the free publicity, Drs. Alan Bailey and Frank Coburn called on the Buhlers and on Wednesday night found them, the old-timers, and Mel and Boots Reid gathered at the Cock’s home for the first of several organizational meetings. Soon we were to add Phil and Anita Thair and Peggy Dunn, the Coburn and the Bailey family and John McNaughton. Thus it was after several preparatory meetings, that on May 26 of 1956 the constitution was ratified and a slate of officers elected and the formal application was submitted to the American Unitarian Association in Boston. As expected, we were accepted in due course and the work began to prepare for the formal start of services on September 9 of 1956. Everyone pitched in wonderfully well and we were one of the most highly organized Fellowships on the continent. Dr. Frank Coburn was the original ‘minister’ and gave as his sermon a talk on “Love”.

This, then, is a little of the early history of the founding of this Fellowship and credit goes to many people for its place in Saskatoon today.

1956-57

Following the initial work of having organized the first Fellowship on May 27, 1956 the seventeen original members of the group decided to commence formal services after the summer holidays and a great deal of organizational work was done during the wait. The Nutana Legion Hall on Fifth Street was leased and because it did not have a piano, the first year's rental was paid in advance with a very old but reliable piano bought by the Fellowship. A sign was painted to be placed at the outside of the hall; a mimeograph machine was bought for our Printing Committee of Ed and Mavis Cocks; a lectern was made for the Fellowship; leaflets and a Guest Book were also purchased and the many other details were looked after by a hard-working Executive Committee. Also during the interval many services were held in private homes and it should be pointed out in this history that the Fellowship owes a great debt of gratitude to the Coburn and Bailey families for allowing the use of their spacious homes for services and social events during those early months and since organization in May of 1956.

The summer saw our first annual picnic and this turned out to be a huge success. That summer also saw us meeting our first honest-to-goodness unitarian minister, when Rev. Charles Eddis of Edmonton visited the group for an infant dedication service in late August. Those of us fortunate to be able to attend this service were highly impressed with the unifying feeling it gave the group. Services began with an excellent talk by Frank Coburn and were followed by an excellent variety of programs under the able direction of Peggy Dunn, who was succeeded due to ill health by Anita Thair. The Fellowship had its first visit from Dr. Lotta Hitschmanova, and we were highly impressed by her dynamic personality. This was also the year of the Yeager controversy, after which a Special Meeting was held to recommend that all future ministerial invitations be made by the Fellowship alone. A Newsletter was established with Mavis Cocks being the original editor, publisher, etc. Saskatoon hosted the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Western Canadian Conference and were treated to an inspiring service by Charles Eddis and Philip Petursson. The first annual Christmas party was a huge success and featured all phases of the Fellowship working together to produce excellent and well received entertainment. January of 1957 saw dog days fall upon the Fellowship with poor attendance and falling finances.

However, when our first annual united Unitarian Appeal campaign was held in February, the membership rallied behind the Treasurer to give Saskatoon the highest per capita donation to our denomination of all Canadian churches. The first Annual Meeting was well attended and featured constitutional change to admit members 14 years of age and over. The growth in our membership was from 17 to 37 in the first eleven months.

This was a highly successful year—membership increased and enthusiasm knew no bounds. Everyone pitched in on every occasion to ensure that the Fellowship would increase as a voice of liberalism in an otherwise orthodox city. Space does not permit thanks for each individual who worked in his or her own way to further the cause of Unitarianism in the city but one person in particular, Frank Coburn, deserves special mention herein for his fine leadership and very kind assistance in all possible ways.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

1956-57

President	Dr. Frank Coburn
Vice-President	Clark Shea
Secretary	Edna Buhler
Treasurer	Garth Buhler
Program Chairman	Peggy Dunn succeeded by Anita Thair

1957-58

The year started out well with a continuance of the desire to move forward in Saskatoon. Attendance picked up considerably with the return of more temperate weather. The annual picnic was held on a sweltering hot day at the country home of Jim F. Wright, south of Saskatoon, and once again a large turnout was in evidence to enjoy one of the days of good fellowship with each other. The financial outlook grew rather serious during the summer months of 1957, but an appeal from the Treasurer brought forth amazing and rapid results. (This, incidentally, was the first time that the Fellowship faced a real financial crisis and it was quickly overcome when made known to the membership.)

Garth McDowell took over the very difficult position of Program Chairman and programs were kept at a very high standard throughout his term, as has been the case since the inception of the Fellowship. We were again honored in the Fall by a visit from Dr. Lotta Hitschmanova, who gave a dynamic service to the group. We were also favored by a visit from Dr. Edna Brunner of the Religious Education branch of the Council of Liberal Churches in Boston. She spoke and gave an illustrated talk on the religious education system of the liberal churches and was well received by the local group at both morning and evening services. The second annual Christmas party played to a packed house of both our own members and several friends. The program featured the L.R.Y., Eats, films and community singing.

Early in the new year of 1958, Rev. Charles W. Eddis of Edmonton visited the Fellowship and gave his farewell address to our group before leaving for his new Lakeshore Church in Montreal, P.Q. Early in 1958, a new Heyer Duplicating machine was purchased for our hard-working Printing Committee, and matters were made much easier for Ed Cocks, who had done a tremendous job with an old machine. New Order of Service sheets were ordered to improve the decor of our services. The *Challenge* was born, with Edna Buhler taking over as the new Editor of a new paper.

Early in 1958 we changed meeting places, having outgrown the old Nutana Legion Hall and our meeting place was now at the corner of Dufferin and Main in the Bob Lynn Hall. The Annual Meeting on March 11 of 1958 proved to be a fiery one. Practically every Executive position was keenly contested. Edna Buhler assailed the membership for the air of apathy which she felt had crept into the Fellowship and called for more hard work by all members to ensure our growth as a reckoning force in local religious affairs. Membership rose from 37 to 46 during the past eleven-month period. The constitution was amended to allow for a larger Executive Committee and for tenure of office to be indefinite, except in the case of the President, who was limited to two consecutive terms of office. Retiring President Frank Coburn was honored with a gift from his many friends in the Fellowship for his fine and unselfish leadership during the first two years under his guidance.

1957-58 was a good year on the whole and, though enthusiasm was not as high as in the past, most signs pointed to a good year for the balance of 1958 if everyone would pitch into the many functions needed to maintain Fellowship programs. During the balance of 1958, all members were to be given an opportunity to be responsible for a program and it was hoped that the load would be taken off the newly elected committee of Edan Buhler and John Marian.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES
1957-58

President	Dr. Frank Coburn
Vice-President	Clark Shea
Secretary	D. Mavis Cocks
Treasurer	Garth Buhler
Program Chairman	Garth McDowell
Religious Education	Reba Coburn

1958

The Membership rallied wonderfully under Edan Buhler and John Marian to provide or be responsible for services during the year. The *Challenge*, official Newsletter of the Unitarian Fellowship of Saskatoon, nearly floundered because of a lack of contributions but was saved when Mrs. Emma Ducie graciously consented to take it over in the Fall of 1958.

Dr. John Marian, our sole official delegate to the Western Canadian Unitarian Conference meetings in late June at Edmonton brought back news of a plan to secure a minister to share services between Wynyard, Regina and Saskatoon. Executive members of these groups held an organizational meeting in Saskatoon in August to look into the possibilities of such a plan and all were in agreement in principle. A great deal of work went into the preparation of the final draft of this plan before it was presented to the American Unitarian Association. It was, however, found unacceptable, mostly because of the lack of ministerial candidates for proposed Unitarian churches. The Executive Committee postponed further action on this question until 1959.

The Annual picnic was held in Devil's Dip on the banks of the Saskatchewan River in June, but attendance was much poorer despite the fact that it was a beautiful day and most families were in Saskatoon for the day. Coffee hours, which proved so enjoyable in the earlier days of our group, were practically non-existent in 1958 due to lack of volunteers to help with the serving and cleaning-up details. Programs were of a high calibre though attendance fell off sharply after the summer holidays with an average of 20-30 people attending the Sunday services.

The highlight of 1958 programs was the visit of Philip Petursson from Winnipeg, Manitoba, on November 16. He conducted the service of Child Naming and Dedication for seven children and gave an excellent service following this. Attendance reached a new record on this Sunday, with over 100 being counted—including nearly a one hundred percent turnout of all our signed up members. Several successful social evenings were held, and here again the group owes thanks to the Morgan and Cocks families for their kindness in allowing the use of their homes for social meetings.

With an assist from an anonymous American donor of \$250,000, the Fellowship embarked on an intensive advertising campaign in September. To the end of December, 48 replies had been received, with replies being evenly divided between city and country residents. An immediate

followup was instituted by hard-working Ada Pickford for city replies, and the country replies were promptly forwarded to the Church of the Larger Fellowship (a mail-order Unitarian group) in Boston for followup. This advertising proved to be a bit of a hot potato as it led to some disagreement within our own membership. It was, however, left to be discussed by the Annual Meeting in January.

1958 saw the Fellowship lose six members due to resignations and moves, and the year ended with a membership of 52, a net loss of one for the year. 1958 saw the first marriage in Saskatoon when Peggy Dunn became the wife of Raymond Leger. Mr. I. E. Dahlby, a non-member but faithful attender of our meetings, died in December. Clark Shea, one of the original members and a tireless worker for the Fellowship, moved to Vancouver during the summer. Edan Buhler, poet extraordinary, had her first poem published in the Star-Phoenix prior to Remembrance Day and was financially rewarded for her effort.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1958

President	Garth McDowell
Vice-President	Philip Thair
Secretary	Melville Reid
Treasurer	Garth Buhler
Program Chairman	Edan Buhler
Co-Program Chairman	John Marian
Religious Education	Reba Coburn
Membership Chairman	Ada Pickford
Publicity Chairman	Jim Bolton
Past-President	Frank Coburn

1959

The year started with the Annual Meeting on January 8 at Bob Lynn Hall, with a fair turnout considering the bitter weather on that date. Newly elected Executive members John Marian, Gordon Leckie, Emma and Rose Ducie were welcomed to the Executive Committee. The meeting went in favor of the Fellowship making every effort to secure the services of a minister. In this connection, the Fellowship was able to make contact with a minister from Rochester, Minnesota, Rev. George LaPointe.

Rev. LaPointe and his wife paid a flying visit to the group in February and received a very warm welcome to our group and was well regarded as possibly the man needed to speed the growth of the Fellowship. Mr. LaPointe was welcomed at a social evening at the Bailey home; he met with the Executive Committee and discussed his possible future with our group; he gave the Fellowship an excellent sermon and was well liked by a capacity audience; and he spoke to an appreciative L.R.Y. meeting. The Executive Committee made every effort to make a deal with the American Unitarian Association in Boston to obtain financial aid so that the Fellowship might make use of this talented person's assistance and Dr. Frank Coburn even paid a personal call on A.U.A. headquarters to plead our case but it was to no avail. Boston turned a deaf ear to all pleas and gradually the Lapointe incident faded into obscurity.

The Hi-Fidelity sound system commenced in 1958 was completed and was in frequent use in 1959. An excellent variety of programs was carried on by the new Program Committee, Emma and Rose Ducie, during 1959 with variety being the keynote of their programming. Attendance

fell off sharply once the mild spring weather began, and the Annual Picnic was poorly attended.

Services ended in mid-June and in early September several of our members attended a highly successful Western Canadian Conference Meeting in Valley Centre at Fort Qu'Appelle. With the commencement of formal services on September 9th, the most notable item was the introduction of the pre-service coffee hour each Sunday morning. Attendance increased each week, with average attendance around 40. The coffee before the service proved to be highly acceptable and tended to get the membership to the Fellowship on time and also allowed newcomers to mingle with the older members.

The Fellowship had one death among its members in 1959—Mr. H. L. Saunders. Several members moved away, and at the end of 1959 the membership stood at 59, a net gain of 7 over the figure at December 31, 1958. Finances continued on an even keel during 1959 with the Treasurer keeping reasonably close to the budget presented to the Annual Meeting. The United Unitarian Appeal, a fund raising drive for the maintenance of our denominational H.Q., was so poorly supported that the Treasurer was forced to make a donation from the Treasury to bring our donation to a near respectable figure. The Fellowship again supported its Korean orphan and also responded to a special Sunday offering for the Unitarian Service Committee. On the whole, however, the Treasurer was pleased with the support given by the membership.

Our advertising campaign ended in April and proved disappointing in obtaining a tangible increase in membership. A special Church School advertisement in the Fall brought forth far more dramatic results for a fractional cost and it is the intent to follow up with more of the same type of advertising in 1960. The Debating Society was also launched and proved to be a smash hit.

1959 proved to be an interesting year, with increasing interest shown in the Fellowship, with good prospects for 1960.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 1959

President	Dr. John Marian
Vice-President	Gordon Leckie
Secretary	Mavis Carleton
Treasurer	Garth Buhler
Program Chairman	Emma Ducie
Co-Program Chairman	Rose Ducie
Religious Education	Reba Coburn
Membership Chairman	Ada Pickford
Publicity Chairman	Jim Bolton
Past-President	Garth McDowell

PART 11—1956-75

PREFACE

The summaries in Part I, written at the time, speak for themselves. They reflect, in miniscule, the history of the Fellowship through all its years the growth and enthusiasm followed by a falling-off, sometimes a fear (or threat) of closing then an upward surge again.

Much credit must be given to Garth and Edna Buhler (Cavendish-Boyd), Frank and Reba Coburn and Ed and Mavis Cocks (Carleton) during the formative years of the Fellowship. They worked (and worked!), encouraged, exhorted and in general pushed, pulled and pummelled the new group into the shape and direction that it has followed.

Pat Adams
1975

Homes

In September 1956 the Fellowship started formal services in the Nutana Legion Hall at 907-5th St E. and continued in those cramped quarters until February 2, 1958 when it moved to the Bob Lynn Hall at the corner of Dufferin and Main Street. These premises were larger and much closer to the bus route. Soon the 50 to 75 people regularly attending required a bigger place with rooms for the Sunday School which was flourishing. The YMCA on Spadina Crescent, just off 20th Street, provided the room. Unfortunately, there was a large set of steps to climb and it was impossible to leave the Fellowship “things” spread about. This “housing” problem resulted in a meeting on April 24th, 1963, at the Co-Op Centre Auditorium.

In pursuance of plans and policy accepted at this meeting two committees have been formed:

- a) Building committee—immediate objective of this committee is the purchase and location of suitable property for a building site. (Chairman:Garth McDowell)
- b) Building Finance Committee—immediate task is arrangement for down payment when the building site is purchased. Later a canvas will be made to secure pledges. (Chairman: Frank Coburn)

An “Extra” Challenge of April 3rd, 1964, summarized a general meeting which authorized the committee to “proceed with the first stage (about \$40,000) of a new building on the corner of 7th Street and Early Drive and also to conduct a fund raising drive for \$16,000 for 1964.” Many magnificent ideas for the building were suggested, and the plans even got to the architect stage (Desmond Paine was the consultant). But the May *Challenge* reported that the building fund drive was slow and cast some doubts as to the success of the venture. As time went on it became evident that the financial resources of the Fellowship could not support a new building.

A general meeting on October 8th discussed the “purchase of the Free Methodist Church at the corner of Main Street and Eastlake.” Open house was held twice for the membership to inspect the property. Mavis Carleton, a realtor, made the arrangements for the purchase. The purchasing committee wished to remain anonymous during the purchase agreement, fearing the owners would refuse to sell to such an “unchristian” people. It turned out that it was not the Unitarians the Methodists disliked, but another “church”!

So the treed lot was sold, plans cancelled for building, and on November 15th, 1964 the first service at the permanent home of the Unitarian Fellowship at 502 Main Street was held. “Arts of India”, led by Joan Leslie and Michael Bowie, was the service. At the next annual meeting, the position of “Property Chairman” was added to the list of officers of the Fellowship. From the Methodists the Unitarians inherited the pews and the solemn atmosphere. The first were retained for several years, but the second was dispelled immediately!

By May, 1965, a “Committee of the Interior” had suggested \$5,000 worth of alterations to the building and “didn’t get to first base”. Instead, some partition changes were made in the basement to accommodate the RE classes and paint and drapes were added upstairs.

With minor changes, including “old faithful” which blew regularly to inundate the basement, the building remained the same until 1974 when the Women Alone Society, in cooperation with the Unitarian Fellowship, set up a Day Care Centre on the premises. (It was eventually called Day Care Hayven, after one of the early organizers.) In the basement two more toilets were added, walls removed, kitchen moved to an accessible area, hot water tank installed, walls lined and a rug laid. Upstairs the stage was shortened, exit and office changed, and outside a fence enclosed the side and back yards.

Program

Most of the Saskatoon Unitarians arrived from a different “church”, so it was natural that the first programs reflected the old affiliation, yet with a liberal atmosphere. The majority of the first programs dealt with some aspect of religion or ethics, and always were followed by a question period (at which time smoking was allowed). The first meetings used a formal “order of service” sheet, put first into a hymn book, and later into a green cardboard folder. The format generally followed the more traditional pattern of prelude, hymns, offering, address, benediction, but of course with the added discussion period and coffee. Later, as the Fellowship felt easier about the type of programs, even the “order of service” sheet was eliminated and there was a wide variety of programs with an equally diverse format.

The original programs were arranged by the members, some speaking themselves. They chose the music, either live or recorded, and appropriate readings to suit the topic. Others helped by looking after the “coffee hour”.

It’s interesting to note that a 1957 newsletter reported that some 12 hymn books had disappeared—and asked for their return: Hymn 88 was a real stumbling block for the early singers, even though they did remarkably well with most other efforts.

Professor Robert Paton, a liberal-minded minister, and a member of the Philosophy Department at the University of Saskatchewan, was a frequent speaker during the days at the YMCA and even after the Fellowship moved to Main Street. His reasoned approach to religion and his humor with frequent reference to the Scotch thistle made him a popular speaker.

After 1970, with Rev. Weston gone and most of the pews sold, the meetings became very informal, with the music and readings often dropped from the service and seating “in the round” became common. The subject of many of the talks was social issues, both local and afar, interspersed with programs on the Arts.

During the 1960s, particularly, mid-week discussion groups were an important continuation of the Sunday programs. These frequently met at the Baileys. In addition to these informal meetings was a series on the “Meaning of Unitarianism” a “kit” procured from Boston, to introduce some of the concepts of the Fellowship. The first of these meetings was held at the Alex Morgans in 1963 and then later at the Etches’. The main activity for this course was in 1963 and 1964. In 1963 16 meetings were held with an average attendance of 10. It was reintroduced during the late '60s but there was no active interest in it, and it was dropped.

Religious Education

A religious education program seeking to explain, explore and expand the religious feelings of the children, using a reasoned approach, was what the parents wanted for their children. Reba Coburn was, in 1957, the first RE director. By 1959 she announced that 38 children were attending and had in October of that year packed a Christmas order for their USC child in Korea, Hae-Ja-Kim.

In 1962 the themes for the classes were:

- under 6 years The Words of Life
- 6-8 years The Miracles Around Us

- 9-12 years Stories of Creation
- 12 and over Comparative Religion

The 1963 roster of RE teachers shows the involvement of the membership in the children’s programs.

Ages 3-4	Evelyn Allen Gen Teed
Ages 5-6	Bubs Coleman Charlotte Etches Joanna Miller
Grades 2-3	Bev. Campbell Mrs. L. Figley Gwyneth Everson
Grades 4-5	Reba Coburn Ruth Androsoff Mary Gleave
Grades 6-7	Mary Agnew Mrs. E. Allen Ada Pickford
Grade 8	Mrs. A. J. Moore Helen Buckley Jane Abramson

In 1964 the RE director reported that:

...the different courses of study include Bible study, ancient philosophies, different cultures of today, and studies of various problems a growing child may face in today’s age. Also, special speakers will talk to each class on such topics as anthropology, astronomy, geology, entomology etc. where it fits in with the course of study. There will be 3 teachers for each class—a regular teacher in charge, a substitute, and a ‘stand-in’ teacher.

There were that year 54 children in six classes. Basically, the courses and books supplied by the UUA in Boston were those used for study, but any teacher with different ideas was encouraged to try them.

The number of children grew quickly and remained at a high level. In 1965 seven classes were held and in 1968 there were "73 children in 5 classes from kindergarten through grade 8" and 502 Main Street did not afford sufficient room.

In October of 1965 there had been some experimenting by holding some classes at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday to be able to use the upstairs room and to give the teachers a chance to attend adult services. But it was felt better, by January 1969, to accommodate the RE classes to the time of the adult program. The Karrasel Nursery on Broadway was rented for Sunday mornings to handle the overflow children from the 59 who had registered in the RE program.

In the fall of that year the classes moved to the vacant basement rooms in the Sommerfeld Block almost next door to the Nursery, which had closed during the summer. The Sommerfeld

Block and the Unitarians, after several months, parted company. Two areas were briefly rented in St. Joseph's Separate School, early in 1970, but the RE attendance had by then fallen drastically, as had the adult attendance, and all the classes were once again in the Unitarian Centre. The RE program was decimated. The teachers who had given years of service wished to retire and few others came forward to help.

In the fall of 1971 an effort was made to reintroduce classes and two were indeed held with eight children attending, the emphasis being on "activities". A further effort in February of the next year to replace RE with interest groupings elicited little response, so the children's program was dropped, and babysitting alone, having started the year before the minister arrived, was carried on.

In 1973-74 a "Youth Club", taught by Ian and Barbara Etches, was held, "to create a greater awareness of Unitarianism among our children". This program was ended when replacement leaders were not available.

From the beginning the children had played a vital part in the Fellowship and for years had contributed part of the Christmas program. "The Meaning of Christmas" and the "Carrot Seed" play were fondly remembered, as were the shared sandwiches, cake, cookies and carols at that time.

Any training that was available through the years was gladly entered into by the RE directors. Notable were an RE seminar in Calgary in May, 1963, where three attended from Saskatoon. In October of the same year there was an RE meeting at the Etches', with Rev. Henry Cheetham, Director of RE for the UUA in Boston. Eugene Navias, UUA Director of Education and programming in Boston, in March 1969 gave a short course on the "Decision Making" kit which was subsequently ordered and taught. Mrs. Bill Jenkins from Winnipeg also gave a demonstration on team teaching.

A workshop on the controversial "About Your Sexuality" course was held in Winnipeg, April 20-23rd of 1973, and four people (the Boermas and the Wilsons) who were prepared to later teach the course attended.

The LRY, officially under the arm of the RE committee, alternated between a close and a tenuous relationship with the adults. The group was "born" in the Bailey home on February 3rd, 1956, but the first official meeting occurred on March 1st. Some of the people associated with that first LRY were Don, Mary Lou and Helen Bailey, Clark Shea, Sheena Lawrence, Joan Rogers, Pat Coburn, Andrea Rankin, Roger Cousins, Jackie Found, Franziska Turel and Judith White. It's interesting to note that some of the people active in the LRY were also active in the adult group—namely, Clark Shea, Franziska Turel and Don Bailey.

1965-66 was another notable year for the LRY when Milton Orris, with an "advisory" committee of four parents and four interested adults, undertook the program. By November 1966, the youth group, ages 16 to 19, was meeting on alternate Sundays at the Centre (in addition, a young teens' group, ages 13 to 16, was being led by Shirley Fincham).

The Easter, 1967, LRY Conference was sponsored by the Saskatoon group and had as the theme "Personal Commitment". Norman Ward was the theme speaker.

By 1969, Kristin Kavadas was the LRY president and a busy program was planned. That was the last active year for the LRY.

For many years the Fellowship and children supported USC orphans abroad. By 1959, Hae-Ja-Kim in Korea had been adopted. In 1966 she was replaced by Kin Fan Lam of Hong Kong. She was soon adopted by an English family and by the end of that year R. Mohana of Tanjore, India, was being supported. In 1971 circumstances demanded her return to her crippled mother and thus away from the USC and the Saskatoon Fellowship. During all these years correspondence was exchanged with the girls and several gifts sent, as well as the yearly support.

Challenge

With foresight, the early group realized the value of a newsletter. In October, 1956, therefore, the first issue of *The Unitarian Newsletter* went to press with Mavis Cocks as the editor, aided by Clark Shea. The first editions contained thoughtful quotes, original poems by Edan Buhler, community events, committee reports, and letters to the editor as well as Fellowship news. The miracle of Christmas, December 1957, transformed *The Unitarian Newsletter* into *The Challenge*, with much help from Edan Buhler, the new editor. Christmas candles and holly adorned the newcomer.

In September, 1958, Mrs. E. Ducie took over from Edan Buhler and for the next 9 years, until February, 1967, left her own very special humanitarian stamp on the publication.

Mrs. Ducie was replaced by Wylie Simmonds, who moved away in October of that same year and was replaced by Vi Strom, who carried on until early in 1971; then Mavis Carleton again filled in for the rest of the year. She was replaced by Pat Adams for one year, Gloria (Mowchenko) Boerma for two years, and Ed Shearer for one year. Juliet Janes took over the editorship of *The Challenge* in January of 1976.

Through the years *The Challenge* has chronicled not only the Fellowship's doings, but reflected the thoughts of the editor and the temper of the times. Earlier, news of the VOW, Peace Research Institute, World Federalists, and the Saskatchewan Committee for Control of Radiation Hazards appeared as well as many philosophical quotes in prose and poetry. Later *Challenges* gave news of local Social Action issues such as Abortion Law Repeal, Kamyatin Girls' Home, Con Homes, Mistawasis Reserve, Immigrant and Refugee Aid Society, Friendship Inn, etc.

Ministers

Through the years, neighboring Unitarian ministers were frequent visitors and were called upon for formal duties. Among these were the Rev. Mr. George Jaeger (Wynyard), Charles Eddis (Edmonton), Dwight Brown (Calgary), Phillip Petursson (Winnipeg), Bill Jenkins (Winnipeg), Violet Kokendorfer (Calgary), Gerry Howell (Calgary), Bob Wrigley (Edmonton), Norman Naylor (Winnipeg), and Rob Brownlie (Edmonton). Emil Gudmundson, interdistrict representative between Prairie Star District and the EDCUC, must also be mentioned.

On one business trip to Boston during the early years of the Fellowship, Frank Coburn contacted a soon-to-be-retired minister, George LaPointe, who agreed to move to Saskatoon and serve the group. Unfortunately, he suffered a heart attack before he moved and thus ended the efforts of the "Ministerial Selection Committee".

Around the mid-'60s two trains of thought coalesced to further stimulate the search for a minister. A book from Boston indicated that when a Fellowship reached the size of the Saska-

toon group it would split up, decline, or get a minister. Also, the programming was becoming such a heavy burden that help was needed. Therefore, the 1967 Annual Meeting set the wheels turning by supporting a motion to appoint a minister in the “next year or 2”. A questionnaire, prepared by Norman Wardlaw, was sent out requesting views of the membership re: a minister. Even though the decision had been taken to acquire a minister, the replies to the questionnaire indicated a lack of financial support for him. So methods were suggested to obtain more members, who would help to meet the expected financial obligations. But *The Challenge* editorial of April 9th sounded an unheeded warning.

It spoke of a waning interest in “involvement in the Fellowship”. Nonetheless, a ministerial selection committee was elected (with then-president Norman Wardlaw as chairman of the committee) at the 1968 Annual Meeting. It was hoped that a minister would attract more members to the group. Two candidates were available: Hugh Weston, who visited on May 19th, and Gordon Gibson on June 2nd. To qualify for a UUA grant to churches who obtain their first minister, on May 19th the Fellowship agreed to apply for church status. It was granted.

In November of 1968 Hugh and Helen Weston with their two infant children arrived, and the first talk on November 10th was “Are the Americans the New Romans?” Until the spring of 1969 the Westons lived at 734 Spadina Crescent, then moved to 47 McAskill Crescent for the rest of their stay in Saskatoon.

The executive requested that the “major ministerial emphasis be in the area of contacting potential new Fellowship members” Hugh Weston's Installation Ceremony was held on February 16, 1969 with local theologians, out-of-town WDCUC dignitaries, as well as Fellowship members in attendance.

While here, Mr. Weston instituted a monthly discussion social and sought to fit into the community, but membership and pledges dropped. At a meeting on April 17, 1970, it was confirmed that affording a minister was beyond the financial means of the Saskatoon Fellowship. On October 31st of that year Mr. Weston moved from Saskatoon to the UU Church of Brookfield, Mass.

Social Action

Penal reform was just as pertinent a topic in 1959 as later. In fact, it was the first area of exploration for the Social Action Committee. Garth McDowell was the chairman. This committee must have disbanded, for the April/66 *Challenge* reported a “Social Action Committee was formed for the purpose of considering a form of social action acceptable to the Saskatoon Fellowship”. A \$50.00 donation was made at the same time to the Neestow Project Kindergarten at Green Lake. Later, in November, the Social Action group was investigating possible schemes for the encouragement of Indian development of resources on the reserves. Franziska Turel was named chairman, Social Action members helped in incorporating the Mistawasis Development Society to raise funds for agricultural development. Later, used clothing, toys and household effects were gathered at the Turel and McConnell houses, to be transported to the Mistawasis Reserve and sold, the proceeds to go to equipping their community kitchen.

In 1971 most of the church pews were sold and afterwards the social action efforts of the Fellowship revolved mainly around the use of the building by outside groups—UCWIC, drop-in-centre for local youth, dance classes, psycho-cybernetics class, Abortion Law Repeal group, Churchill River Basin Study group, NDP, Waffle, yoga classes, memorial and funeral services,

and also weddings. It was felt that all members were already active enough in the outside community, and the Social Action Committee was disbanded.

A further Fellowship contribution to the community was to establish the office of “Chaplain”. A person (a member of the Fellowship), was licensed to perform marriages. The services of this person were made available to anyone who wished. Starting in 1971, for one and one-half years Dick Hetherington was the first chaplain. He was followed by Frank Coburn for three years, and in 1976 Pat Adams filled this office.

Following the sudden death of Allan Bailey in October, 1967, a Memorial Fund was created. Funds from this account were to be used, on the decision of the general membership, for socially acceptable causes. One donation was made to the Kamyatin Girls’ Home.

Socials

Christmas, when visiting ministers came; Sunday brunches; parties in private homes; and picnics were the social times which solidified the relationships of the Unitarian Fellowship. The “picnic” signaled the end of the meeting season each year and if it was programmed or relaxed, people seemed to enjoy themselves. Members traveled near and far to enjoy the water, sand, mosquitoes—and each other. Picnics were held at the Wrights’ on Gabriel Road (with pool), Devil’s Dip, Ducie homestead near Dundurn, Hordern’s Grove, Beaver Creek, Stodola gravel pit, Pike Lake, Mistawasis Reserve, Fort Carleton, Kleebaums’ and Grants’ “country estate”, and the river bank near Pike Lake.

Periodically, dance groups have sprung up in the Fellowship. Notable among these were Scottish Country Dance, led in 1966-67 by Norman and Sara Lawson, and later an international folk dance club led by Mike and Rebecca Wilson.

Other

Through the years the Saskatoon group has taken its turn to sponsor the annual conference of the Western District, Canadian Unitarian Council. In 1965 it was held at Watrous and in 1970 at the University of Saskatchewan, coordinated by Frank Coburn. In 1975 it was held at Camp Rayner, and coordinated by Herman Boerma and Ed Shearer.

The mortgage on the Unitarian Centre, purchased at a price of \$18,000, was paid off in the spring of 1974.

In the 1960s a Mr. Alex Cholin, completely unknown to the Fellowship, died and willed his property to the Unitarians. There was some doubt as to whether he meant the beneficiary to be Unitarians or Unity groups, but a legal document was signed and the Fellowship then owned an aluminum painting machine and two lots in Martinsville. Taxes were paid on these two lots for years, then in difficult times we fell behind. Only after an interim when no one would buy the lots and the community of Martinsville would not even repossess them, a real estate boom occurred, and they were sold in the winter of 1975-76 for the grand total of \$4400.00.

1964

President	P. Thair
Past-President	A. Kavadas
Vice-President	G. McDowell
Secretary	B. Campbell
Treasurer.. ..	W. Etches
Program Chairman	P. Tyman
Religious Education	C. Etches
Publicity Chairman	P. Adams
Membership Chairman	L. Price
Member-at-Large	B. O'Regan

1965

President	N. Wardlaw
Past-President.	P. Thair
Vice-President	A. Bailey
Secretary	M. Gleave
Treasurer	W. Etches
Program Chairman	J. Leslie
Religious Education	C. Etches
Publicity Chairman	P. Adams
Membership Chairman	G. McDowell
Property Chairman.. ..	L. Finchan

1966

President	N. Wardlaw
Past-President.	P. Thair
Vice-President	A. Bailey
Secretary.. ..	M. Gleave
Treasurer	W. Etches
Program Chairman	M. Bailey
Religious Education	A. Coxworth
Publicity Chairman	P. Adams
Property Chairman	P. Price
Membership Chairman	R. Romuld
Assistant Program	M. Orris

1967

President	A. Bailey
Past-President	N. Wardlaw
Vice-President	T. Kuchta
Secretary	M. Gleave
Treasurer	L. Bergstrom
Program Chairman.	N. Lawson
Religious Education	A. Coxworth
Publicity Chairman	V. Strom
Property Chairman	P. Price
Membership Chairman	R. Stauffer
Social Action.	F. Turel
Fund Raising	A. Gleave

PART III—1971-81

Preface

It will come as no surprise to anyone familiar with the Saskatoon Fellowship, let alone Unitarians generally, that no two of us would approach a problem in the same way. I have followed a simple chronology, taking the history a year at a time, in preparing this update, rather than attempting the more difficult integration of chronology and theme that Pat Adams followed in her section. As a result there is some overlap, as I have chosen to begin my bit of history in 1971, the year after the departure of Reverend Weston, and Pat's work in some areas covers the period up to 1976. A rigid division between one section and another of the history seemed inappropriate, almost "un-Unitarian" to us, and the event of having a minister in our corporate life seemed an appropriate point at which to date a new beginning.

Having chosen a chronological format, I found I had other choices to make. Within each year I have attempted to concentrate on the outstanding events and preoccupations of the year, to convey, as it were, the "flavour" of the year without taking the reader through a month-by-month accounting of events. A history thus constructed is bound to be somewhat idiosyncratic, and it is perhaps inevitable that I will have omitted mention of happenings and persons as important to the forging of the Fellowship as those included on these pages. If this is so, the blame is mine, and I offer my apologies to those omitted, and to the Fellowship as a whole for any insufficiencies, along with my thanks for the opportunity to participate in this way in the celebrations for the 25th.

Gail A. McConnell
August 1981

Unitarians: 1971

1970 had been a difficult year for the Fellowship, and the members faced 1971 with a sense of failure and anxiety for their collective future. The attempt to support and integrate a full-time ministerial function in the Fellowship had failed.

In the fall of 1970 Reverend Hugh Weston and his wife Helen returned to the United States, where Reverend Weston eventually left the ministry altogether. At that time the Fellowship still had its annual meeting in January, and the firm message of Phil Price as he "handed" over at the end of 1970 is a splendid example of the way in which leadership chosen from within the Fellowship has been our steady strength. He said, in part:

We have lost many good friends and members this year. Some through death, some by choice and some by necessity. We also terminated our exposure to a resident minister. This all seems part of the typical life of a group such as ours and as each age tends to produce its own man (or woman) of the moment, so does the Fellowship continue on its way. (*The Challenge*, Christmas 1970).

The sense of a hiatus in the leadership was intensified by the fact that Phil, who had stepped up from the vice-president's post to act as president when Jim Chrones had taken his family to Toronto, had himself retired to the west coast by the end of the year. Nevertheless, the members started out boldly in the new year, to judge by their programming. From January to March a series of Sunday morning topics covered the present status of man's knowledge, in presentations as various as "Quality Control of Man Today" presented by Elizabeth Ives, geneticist, and "Man as a Socio-Economic Being", presented by John Richards, MLA.

The loss of the minister, of course, brought back the old debate about structure vs free expression in the Sunday meetings. Dick Hetherington raised the issue in the February *Challenge* of 1971 as a "Lack of pattern in Sunday programming to achieve objectives other than those of the person or persons 'in charge'." The other side of the balance, he wrote, was that "it is extremely important that this group maintain and nourish its freedom 'for' self-determinism and creativity in the deeper dimensions of life, and therefore freedom 'from' those forms which serve currently to stifle and suffocate."

By the end of 1971 the programming frequently took the form of opening and closing exercises sandwiching the free expression of individual and collective opinion, "planned deliberately" according to the November *Challenge* as a "wind/down from the fairly intense discussions we have been having lately, and as a breathing space before launching into the next topic [Human Sexuality, with Frank Coburn], which seems to be equally absorbing."

The "Comfortable Pew Fund" was started this year. The Fellowship sold the old pews out from under the congregation. They were a bargain, at \$9.00 for the long ones and \$6.00 for the short pews, and were snapped up. Perhaps Unitarians warped into right angles by the unyielding benches inherited from the Free Methodists felt that it was a pleasure to buy their way out of bondage. By mid-year 20 comfortable blue chairs were obliterating the memory of splinters and varnish.

The Social Action Committee was working hard with the Mistawasis Reserve Chief Arthur Ledoux and some of his councillors to support fundraising projects on the reserve. Rummage sales of clothing and household articles were held on the reserve, which were as important for recycling useable articles as they were for fundraising. Members of the Fellowship and reserve

members had joined together to register a “Mistawasis Development Society” to act as an “umbrella” organization for their joint activities, and the Society was raising money through many small local projects to support the band kindergarten, which was preparing the small children for their first experience of schooling in English, the band sports activities, and equipping the community hall on the reserve to serve as a banquet hall and social centre for the reserve. The Chief invited the Fellowship to hold their annual picnic on the reserve in 1971, enabling Mistawasis council members and Unitarians to meet one another.

The new chairs were part of a sprucing up which was going on in other parts of the Fellowship’s home, as well. The basement was given some attention to make it suitable for the reviving Religious Education program, and local artists were being invited to display their work in the meeting hall. Member Dorothy Boerma's batiks were displayed, and she and Lorna Cutting, also a member, were participants this year in the foundation of the Shoestring Gallery, originally a women artists’ collective, which is now one of Western Canada’s better small galleries.

During 1971 the Fellowship said adieu to Dr. Mary Marshall (Mrs. Alan Bailey), who left Saskatoon to take up residence in White Rock, B.C., and “au revoir” to Bill and Charlotte Etches, who moved to Seattle for post-graduate studies.

The executive in 1971 was:

President.	Pat Adams
Vice-President.	Bob Randell
Secretary	Terry Harley
Treasurer	Carl Cowell
Social Action	Franziska Turel
Hospitality	Gloria Kavadas
Program Chairman	John Marian
Publicity Chairman	Gail McConnell
Challenge Editor	Mavis Carleton
Membership	Dick Hetherington
Member-at-Large	Chuck Cutting

1971 was also the year that the Fellowship changed the date of its annual meeting from January to October. As a result it was a year in which the usual Unitarian anxiety about fundraising and pledges was seemingly boundless—there was a canvass after the regular annual meeting in January, which ran into the new canvass starting after the new annual meeting in October.

Unitarians: 1972

1972 was a year of consolidation at home for the Fellowship, as their financial situation in particular stabilised with the repayment of the loan that had been hanging over their collective life. It was also a year of branching out in social action, as members began more and more to bring their concerns in the local and wider community to the Fellowship for discussion and support.

A series in January on education, for example, led to the presentation of a brief on behalf of the Fellowship to the hearings of a Saskatoon Citizens’ Committee which was looking into the aims of education, the “Citizens’ School Inquiry”. The Fellowship’s recommendation was that

the local school board integrate the concept of a “free school” into the existing school system to provide an alternative to the existing, more conservative institutions, and suggested that Nutana Collegiate could be developed as an “experimental institution”.

In addition to the continuing work with the Mistawasis Band, support was extended to a local group establishing a home for girls in trouble in Saskatoon, the Kamyatin Girls’ Home. Part of the money in our Memorial Fund was used for the purpose and enabled the organizers to open the home at the beginning of September as planned, according to Social Action director Franziska Turel’s report to the Annual Meeting.

On the less serious side of Social Action, the Centre was also being used as a depot for old newspapers, which were being “recycled” by the Small Animal Clinic at the University’s College of Veterinary Medicine. On a personal level, Barbara and Robin Morrall adopted a baby from war-torn Bangladesh, an infant refugee brought to Canada partly with the help of the Unitarian minister in Montreal, and his wife.

The Centre facilities were made available to an increasing number and variety of community groups, including the Zodiac Club (a men’s “gay liberation” group), UCWIC, which was a self-help group formed by welfare recipients, a teen-age drop-in centre operated by Grace-Westminster Church and having “overflow” problems, a dance class, the Free School, and an OFY (Opportunities For Youth) children's recreation program.

The programs for the year reflected the interest in community issues, starting with the January series on education. The Fellowship also heard from representatives of local communes, including a Saskatoon convent and the Riverside Hutterite community, about prisons and prisoners in Saskatchewan, unwed mothers’ problems, and gay liberation. The needs of local organizations such as Friendship Inn, the Special Foster Home Program of the Department of Social Services, and the Saskatchewan Association for Mental Health were drawn to members’ attention.

In March the Fellowship was saddened by the death of Dorothy Boerma, after a long illness. Later in the year Vi and Lorne Stalwick placed a picture in the Centre in memory of their son Robbie, who also passed away during the year.

At the Annual General Meeting in October the following were elected to the executive:

President	Herman Boerma
Vice-President	Carl Cowell
Secretary... ..	Terry Harley
Treasurer	Perky Grant
Receiver	Ed Shearer
Building	Carl Cowell
Publicity.	June Bantjes
Hospitality	Angela Beale
Challenge	Gloria Mowchenko
Membership	Izsa Dravnieks
Social Action	Franziska Turel
Phone Committee	Norma Lee Bisha
Members-at-Large	Michael Bantjes
	Gail Matheson
Chaplain.	Frank Coburn
Program Chairman	Franziska Turel

Program Committee Members Rebecca Wilson
Margo Garmson
Don Redl
June Bantjes

Unitarians: 1973

Activities in 1973 reflected the growing interest within the Fellowship in their identity as part of a larger Unitarian community, without lessening the intensity of their involvement in local issues. At the request of the executive, Pat Adams and Franziska Turel began work on a history of the Fellowship, and the group as a whole became more active in sending delegates to Canadian Unitarian Council (CUC) and Western District (WDCUC) gatherings. A visit from Clayton Peterson, president of the CUC, indicated that this phenomenon was not restricted to Saskatoon, but that there was nation-wide a more positive feeling about Unitarianism.

The Saskatoon Fellowship took steps during the year to enable some of its members to participate in training for a Unitarian “extension” program on Human Sexuality, aimed at informing teenagers (and their parents) of the “good news about sex”. Two couples from the Fellowship, Rebecca and Mike Wilson, and Gloria and Herman Boerma, were much in demand for some time within the Fellowship and the community as workshop leaders in this area. (Gloria Mowchenko and Herman Boerma were married in May.) Interest in local affairs was intense, as members were urged to attend the WDCUC Conference being arranged by the Regina Fellowship and eventually five voting delegates were sent. On the other hand, for national meetings in Ontario the executive contented themselves with announcing that if anyone wanted to go they would kick in \$50.

However, at the same time, the Religious Education program was in disarray, and the Fellowship was struggling just to find people to babysit the children who came with their parents. The year passed without seeing the re-establishment of an RE program.

The programming at the Sunday meetings continued to reflect a broadening involvement in community issues on the part of the Fellowship. Women’s issues, family planning and the abortion issue, treatment of the criminally insane, community resource centre needs, local adoptions problems, legal aid, Bhuddism, Christianity, totalitarianism, Israeli kibbutzim, Quaker communities and Unitarianism were all topics for discussion. While support for ongoing programs such as the Kamyatin Home and the Mistawasis Band were not abandoned, Unitarians also had their attention drawn to the need of the Community AID Resource Centre for volunteers, and to the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) Special Committee On Population and Environment (SCOPE). Members of the Fellowship were deeply involved in environmental issues, and providing leadership in the community in dealing with them. Ewen Coxworth was president of the Saskatoon Environmental Society (SES), and Diana Wright and Terry Harley were editor and co-producer respectively of *Probe*, the prize-winning Saskatchewan environmental magazine.

The May issue of *The Challenge* records fragments of a discussion on programming held at a family brunch which is a fair sample of the collective Unitarian mind at work on the problem of dealing with issues as an ethical society:

... maybe it’s time for another series on Unitarianism ... who could we get to do it? ... I think we should start off with a party ... yes, to welcome new members, that’s a good idea ... real life experiences make the most interesting programmes ... maybe we could exchange visits with some other churches in

Saskatoon...who knows anything about the Bahai? ... let's discuss the anthropological aspect of religion, why do people need it ... we should have more brunches, they're fun and the kids can share the fellowship too ... yes, we need to involve our children more ... how about a new stereo system ... okay, you're in charge ... I'd like to see more structure in the format of the programme, some of us appreciate and take comfort in it ... I'd like to see flexibility in the format of the programme ... let's have both ... how about four planned parties during the year ... should we count the unplanned ones too ... are we still collecting newspapers for the Small Animal Clinic ... come on, let's get this meeting together ... how about one person in charge of the programmes each month, including selection of music, readings, and coordinating the whole morning ... good, you can be the first to volunteer ...let's get new people involved as quickly as possible; ... maybe she could be on the executive ...how about having coffee ready at 10:45 am and ... starting on time?

While the above may sound familiar to Unitarian ears, the report of the treasurer to the executive in September of this year struck an unusual note: "We are within the budget and there are no problems." The mortgage was nearly paid off, and the plumbing seemed (temporarily) at peace. The Fellowship decided to abandon the regular morning collection and rely on a box by the door instead, and sanctioned investment in a coffee urn.

The new executive elected at the Annual General Meeting in October was:

President	Herman Boerma
Vice-President	Ed Shearer
Secretary	Gail Matheson
Receiver	Ed Shearer
Treasurer	Perky Grant
Building	Mike Wilson
Hospitality	Violet Strom
Challenge	Rita Romuld
Membership	Pat Adams
Social Action	Franziska Turel
Chaplain	Frank Coburn
Member-at-Large	Terry Harley
Program Chairman, (including Publicity)	Gloria Boerma

Unitarians: 1974

This year marked a kind of high tide in the Fellowship's direct involvement in community issues, as they undertook to become hosts to a day care centre. The Women Alone Society approached the Unitarians in May asking to use the Unitarian Centre as a day care facility to help single parents and low income families find suitable care for their children. In July a special General Meeting of the Fellowship approved both the request and proposals for alterations to the Centre, which were to be shared by the day care and the Fellowship. Michael Wilson accepted responsibility for supervising the work, and the "Children's Day Care Hayven" was able to hold its official opening in December of 1974.

The opening attracted the attention of the local media, and was attended by a good deal of optimism about the future of the day care movement generally in Saskatoon. The “Hayven’s” announced philosophy of care was to integrate children of different ages, cultural and economic backgrounds. They were hoping to be able to accept 40 children from the ages of 2 to 5, and to operate as a non-profit society which would evolve into a co-operative run by a board of parents. In the first fall of operation Unitarian volunteers pitched in to help when the day care was short-staffed.

The Fellowship was directly involved in other community organizations as well. They lent the Saskatoon Creative Play School \$200 from the Memorial Fund, to purchase a special language kit for children needing speech therapy, and joined the Saskatoon Community Cable TV Co-op as a gesture of support. Members were disappointed when the Co-op lost out to a private consortium when the CRTC eventually held its hearings on the cable license in Saskatoon.

In “domestic” affairs, the needs of the young ones in the congregation were being cared for through a “youth club” being led by Ian and Barbara Etches, themselves “graduates” of the former Religious Education program. In April the Fellowship was host to a SAMNEWT (Saskatchewan, Alberta, Manitoba, Northwest Territories) Conference (formerly LRY) for high school age young people. Gloria Boerma attended the CUC annual meeting in Hamilton in May, and returned with a glowing report of participation in the larger world of Canadian Unitarianism. A sexuality workshop was conducted for 11- to 13-year-olds in the Centre, with great enthusiasm from all participants, and with considerable enlightenment being afforded the adult leaders. For the adult meetings, the executive authorized the purchase of a clock and bells to help get the Sunday morning meetings started promptly at 11:00 a.m.

A letter from the Regina Fellowship suggesting the possibility of sharing a minister gave rise to an invitation to the Regina Fellowship for a weekend of fellowship. The invitation was warmly accepted, and the first of the now traditional exchange visits took place in April in Saskatoon.

In March the Fellowship “burned the mortgage” and were feeling rather healthy financially, but the expenses of the renovations for the daycare accommodation restored the urgency to the pleas for pledges normal to the Unitarian treasurer. However, the renovations had resulted in a much improved kitchen facility, and the food at the 1974 Christmas party was considerably above the usual potluck standard.

Violet Strom, who had taken a self-imposed “sabbatical” from the Fellowship to get the perspective of solitude on the religious life, returned in 1974 with a renewed appreciation for interaction with the group. In the January *Challenge* she provided the Fellowship with a brief description of her personal odyssey, entitled “A Unitarian's Pilgrim's Progress”, which she concluded:

I am a Unitarian because I believe in reason, not blind faith, and in the test of experience. I believe the use of reason is for discrimination between what builds and what destroys, and for the positive reinforcement of the reverence for life. I believe in social action. I like to think of the Fellowship as a place where we can be better informed and know ourselves, so we can act more intelligently in the area where we can make the best contribution.

At the Annual General Meeting the Fellowship elected the following Board of Directors, to take office in January 1975:

President	Ed Shearer
Vice-President and Property ..	Mike Wilson
Secretary	Stella Harrison
Treasurer	Glen Fulton
Receiver	Ed Bisha
Program Coordinator	Violet Strom
Social Action	Franziska Turel
Challenge	Rita Romuld
Member-at-Large and Cable TV Co-op Liaison. ...	Terry Harley
Publicity	June Bantjes
Chaplain	Frank Coburn

Unitarians: 1975

In March of this year the Fellowship became involved in trying to help a long-standing member, Dr. John Justice Marian, who had been denied hospital privileges, and hence his livelihood as a vascular surgeon, as a result of a clash with his colleagues. Dr. Marian, who was Chairman of the Medical Committee of the Saskatchewan Human Rights Association, incurred the hostility of the medical community by making efforts to expose and protest certain anaesthetic practices, in the process of which one of his patients had died. The Fellowship wrote letters and held a social evening at the McConnells' to show their support for Dr. Marian but the situation remained unchanged.

In 1975 the Saskatoon Fellowship was host to the WDCUC annual meeting, which was held at Camp Rayner in July. Herman Boerma had undertaken the organization, but suffered a severe injury to his neck in a bicycle accident. With Herman in traction for months, Ed Shearer took over and did yeoman work on the conference. The event moved the editor of the *Challenge*, Rita Romuld, to her first editorial. Her "main afterthought" was that "I'm glad I'm a Unitarian", and, she said, "I simply can't imagine where in the world one might find a group of men, women, children and babies who could be more thoughtful, patient and tolerant than that group of 94 people at Camp Rayner were for that long week-end."

In the same year the Fellowship was pleased to announce that the membership was up, with *The Challenge* being mailed to 68 members in town, and 22 out of town by the end of the year.

By 1975 the Unitarian Centre had virtually become a community centre, with day-care facilities five days a week, and many groups using the Centre on a regular basis if not quite as frequently. The executive found it necessary to draw up a set of "house rules" for their various tenants, and the role of landlord was occasionally a strain for the Fellowship. The day care centre in particular seemed to be suffering from financial as well as personnel problems, and created many "housekeeping" crises for their hosts. However, on balance by the end of 1975 the Fellowship still felt that the relationship was more positive than negative, and everyone enjoyed the new facilities that the day care experiment had spurred them to develop.

Part of the relaxed atmosphere at year-end was created by the discovery that the ugly duckling property in Martensville, that the Fellowship had been considering letting go for non-payment of taxes, suddenly acquired value. The Town of Matensville decided to service

the land, and it went from a negative value to \$4,000 plus. The annual appeal for pledges that year was remarkably gentle. Financial chairman Ed Shearer wrote to his fellow Unitarians:

... The size of your donation is not really so important now that the Fellowship seems in relatively good financial straits. Just the fact that you make a pledge and in this way become a supporting member of a really worthwhile and concerned organization seems enough ... However, he had second thoughts, and added a post script: On re-reading the above, it strikes me that the financial picture has been made to appear a bit too rosy. We really do need your financial help.

The executive elected at the Annual General Meeting in October for 1976 was:

President	Terry Harley
Vice-President.	Mike Wilson
Secretary	Lillian Strom
Treasurer	Glenn Fulton
Property	Gerry Rank
Publicity and <i>Challenge</i>	Juliet Janes
Social Convener	Gail McConnell
Bookings	Carl Cowell
Chaplain	Pat Adams

The offices of “receiver” and “social action chairman” disappeared, in this slate. It was felt that it was no longer necessary or convenient to divide the office of receiver from that of treasurer, so the treasurer took over both functions. In the social action field, the Fellowship seemed to have branched out in all directions, and no longer needed a specific “in-house” committee to direct members’ attention to deserving causes. The new requirement, for a “bookings” chairman, was in part a reflection of this new collective activity.

Unitarians: 1976

1976 brought less anguish but continuing disappointment for the Fellowship in its relations with the community. The daycare centre organization collapsed in a welter of financial difficulties and internal dissension. The cooperative community cable TV application to the CRTC for licensing, which the Fellowship was supporting, was refused.

In March of the previous year the Day Care Hayven Limited had made the change to co-op status, and incorporated under the name Co-operative Day Care Haven Limited. However, their early hopes of offering service to low-income families were dashed by the cost of operating the Centre, and by the fall of 1975 they had had to raise their fees from \$100 per child per month to \$130. They did not achieve the number of registrants required to make the operation feasible, and were obliged to cut corners. In November of that year “Perky” Grant, liaison person between the Day Care and the Fellowship, reported to the Fellowship that there was a number of infractions of the daycare regulations (as set forth by the Department of Social Services) taking place, the most serious of which concerned adequate supervision of the children. In addition the Fellowship was finding that the Day Care were “bad tenants”, in that they were erratic in paying their rent, and created considerable janitorial problems.

The Day Care's problems were not entirely of their own making. In May of 1976, representative of three daycare centres, including the Fellowship's tenants, had met with Social Services Minister Herman Rolfes to protest the lack of government support for daycare in the province. Even when pay rates were kept at or close to the minimum wage, the daycare organizations were finding it necessary to raise fees beyond what people could pay, and as a result enrolments dropped, staff had to be laid off, and a vicious circle was created which led to failure of the service altogether. The minister's response, according to a *Star-Phoenix* report of 29 May 1976, was that he did not believe in universal daycare, and nor did most of the province. He also said, according to the newspaper, that support of daycare is an important but not a first-rank priority of the government.

In December, after the collapse of the Day Care Haven Co-operative, president Terry Harley sent a letter to the minister on behalf of the Fellowship asking for a public inquiry into daycare in Saskatchewan, to address a number of questions regarding society's responsibility regarding the provision of daycare services, and the supervision and operation of such services. To date no such inquiry has taken place.

The report in the *Challenge* for March/April indicates that Terry Harley, in her role as Fellowship representative on the Saskatoon Cablevision Co-operative, thought that the co-op's presentation to the Canadian Radio-Television Commission (CRTC) was impressive. However, her remark that "some of them [the Commissioners] seemed to have a little difficulty understanding Saskatchewan-type co-operatives" proved to be prescient. By September the news was out that a private organization had been granted the license.

The history of the Fellowship undertaken in 1974 was completed by Pat Adams, and a copy forwarded to Phillip Hewat, who had taken over work on a history of Unitarians in Canada.

Within the Fellowship the increase in capital available gave added strength to the recurrent urge of the membership to refurbish their home. Plans went forward to paint the interior, and a new euphemism for the cheapest deal was coined. The Board was reported to have accepted "the most encouraging quotation".

At the Annual General Meeting the following new executive was chosen for 1977:

President.. Mike Wilson
Vice-President and
Programme Chairman Gail McConnell
Treasurer Glenn Fulton
Secretary Lillian Strom
Social Programme June McDonald
Chaplain Pat Adams
Newsletter and publicity Juliet Janes
Property Ed Shearer
Dennis Harley

Eric Shearer became the new janitor.

Unitarians: 1977

In 1977 the Fellowship turned its collective attention to its internal life. Early in the year the members enjoyed a visit from Emil Gudmundson, sponsored by the WDCUC. Reverend Gudmundson's "agenda" was:

to discuss the *potential* of the Fellowship, the *priorities* of the present membership, and the *responsibility* to assure that there is a vital group for those who are seeking Unitarianism ... we have a rule of thumb [said Mr. Gudmundson] that our Unitarian potential is one member per 1000 to 1200 population and the ratio is less where there are educational institutions, especially universities and research facilities.

Members were urged to attend the WDCUC RE conference in Winnipeg in November, the "We Can Do 2" conference, and the Fellowship sent half a dozen delegates, including both young people and adults. The concerns raised by the conference theme—three stages of religious life: children, LRY and adults—became part of Saskatoon Fellowship discussions in the following two years.

The Religious Education program was being reactivated, with Terry Campbell, Felice Boerma and Ann Harley (all "graduates") looking after two age groups. However, the adults' program was in difficulties.

The system of having one family at a time take responsibility for a month's programming had worked well for two years, but was showing signs of breaking down in 1977. It became necessary to ask for volunteers, and the outgoing executive warned that a renewed commitment was needed.

"Home improvements" went on apace in 1977. A new sound system was installed, and deeply appreciated by the music lovers in the Fellowship. With the cooperation of the Saskatoon Dance Workshop, who had a direct personal interest in the outcome, the floor was refinished. This improvement was later enhanced by new carpeting.

The Fellowship hall was showing signs of becoming Saskatoon's major dance centre. The Saskatoon Dance Workshop conducted several classes at the Centre, and round dance, square dance and folk dance groups continued to meet there. The former Daycare space was occupied by the Saskatoon Environmental Society's "Alternate Energy Project", described as the "headquarters where the attack on the uranium industry is being plotted, and plans for alternate energy systems worked out."

At the Annual General Meeting in November the following were elected to take office in January:

President	Gloria Boerma
Vice-President	Glenn Fulton
Secretary	Violet Strom
Treasurer	Ann Coxworth
Building	Ed Shearer
Chaplain	Pat Adams
Coffee	Eva Wetzel
Challenge	June Bantjes

Unitarians: 1978

“Being a Unitarian” was a central preoccupation of the Fellowship during 1978. Phillip Hewett’s book *On Being a Unitarian* had aroused a good deal of interest among the membership, and the fall programming was dominated by chapter by chapter discussions of the book, on alternate Sundays.

The Religious Education program was still healthy, though small in membership, and was following “The Haunting House”, a religious curriculum for 5- to 7-year-olds exploring each person’s need for a space in which to feel at home.

Earlier in the year the adult programming had encouraged members to present their own philosophies for discussion, in “capsule” form, and to share with the Fellowship their experiences on the road to Unitarianism.

This sharing and learning was broadened late in the year when the Fellowship acted as host to the WDCUC annual religious education conference, billed as “We Can Do 3 ” in November. It was a successful conference, on the theme of “more than a social group ”, and the effort to encourage Unitarian teenagers to come was successful as well. Of a total attendance of 75, nearly one-third (24) were young people.

Tragically, two of the Winnipeg delegation died in a car accident on the way home—Jan Muller and Erna Himmer. Herman Boerma and Glenn Fulton attended the memorial service in Winnipeg for the Saskatoon Fellowship, and the Fellowship held a brief memorial service as well.

Participation in Western District Unitarian affairs was active on both sides of the border in 1978. In Canada, the three Fellowships in the District, Regina, Saskatoon and Thunder Bay, met in Regina to discuss common problems and goals. Joan Goodwin of the UUA and Emil Gudmundson, the interdistrict representative, provided leadership to help in planning new directions.

Saskatoon sent a carload of delegates to the Prairie Galaxy Conference in Minnesota. The Fellowship also participated in the visiting minister program, and enjoyed a “visiting minister” week-end with John Gilbert of the Winnipeg congregation in May, a week-end in which the Regina Fellowship participated. A discussion group developed out of one of the Sunday morning programs in April—a program centred around one of the tapes from the Centre for Death Education and Research (University of Minnesota), on death, grief and bereavement.

Work on the interior of the Centre had passed well beyond the “repair and refurbish” stage, and had become a “Centre beautification project”. Plants, poster boards, art works of inestimable sentimental value (being the work of Fellowship members) and a unique Unitarian fabric hanging were added to the interior in an orgy of beautification in April. The members’ efforts were celebrated by an article contributed by Vi Strom to the November issue of the *Canadian Unitarian*.

Although by the end of the year adult participation levels had not changed very much—about 18 on the average on Sunday mornings—President Gloria Boerma felt at the end of the year that the increased participation in Western District activities had helped in developing

leadership within the group. The Fellowship felt bold enough, and experienced enough, to agree to host the 1980 Prairie Galaxy Conference.

At the Annual General Meeting in November, the following were elected to the 1979 executive:

President	Gloria Boerma
Vice-President	Glenn Fulton
Secretary	Dale Hackinen
Treasurer	Ann Coxworth
Chaplain	Pat Adams
Auditor for 1979	Pat Adams
Building and Property	Dennis Harley
<i>Challenge</i> and Publicity	Debbie Lake
	Carl von Baeyer
Hospitality... ..	Eva Wetzel

Unitarians: 1979

The self-examination and study of Unitarianism in the preceding two years culminated in a collective “goal-setting session” in January of this year, in which members articulated two very different, although not incompatible, objectives.

On the one hand, a strong desire to pursue practical projects of some social merit was expressed. Unitarians were urged in the *Challenge* to help clean and fix the Fellowship Centre, and to assist their “thrifty, eco-conscious Fellowship Executive” to find ways to “take advantage of the sun, sand and precipitation gathered in the Fellowship Centre’s back yard.”

For the second year in a row members held a “Bizarre” or small flea market at the 8th Street Co-op. This sale netted \$220, most of which was used to pay for a new carpet installed in the basement room now taken over from the Saskatoon Environmental Society (SES) by the Unitarian infants and toddlers. The SES moved upstairs to a new office in the former stage area.

The year’s social action, financed by interest from the Memorial Fund, consisted of grants to the Saskatoon Environmental Society and to MATCH International Centre. The SES was very active, particularly in the public information field. It published *Environment Probe* and the *Nuclear Newsletter*, initiated the Energy Conservation Information Centre, and conducted workshops. Project MATCH, a 3rd world development agency focussing on women's needs and resources, selected a women's cooperative gardening and food storage demonstration project in Cameroon for support by the Fellowship.

The “goal-setting session” also resulted in the establishment of interest groups. Members who were interested in music, practical social action projects, membership development, or programming and social events, gathered together in one another’s homes or at the Centre. One project resulted in the development of a “people wall” profiling individual members and their interests. A choral group formed during this year had their premiere performance at the annual Christmas party, and were favourably received. The February “snow party” tradition was revived, after a lapse of two years, and new resolutions taken to maintain it.

The other major objective articulated was the pursuit of the religious. A small group felt that the Fellowship was ready to “graduate” from using published Religious Education materials to preparing their own, and boldly decided to tackle the question: “What is a Unitarian, anyway?” Their objective was to give the children a better understanding of our religious heritage and of Unitarianism in particular.

In the adult program the recurrent issue of “structure” vs “freedom” arose again, and a move was made in the direction of continuity and structure. The program committee proposed that a regular format, consisting of Opening Words, Announcements, Group Participation (e.g., responsive reading, singing, or dancing), Meditation, Program, and Closing Words be adopted in the Sunday morning meetings.

In keeping with what the *Challenge* editors described as “the growing trend toward strengthening the spiritual dimension in our denomination”, when the Fellowship reconvened in September the programs began a series of examinations of beliefs and the search for meaning in life, which extended to the end of the year. Examination of the program notices, however, suggests that the Fellowship assumed some division of the sexes on these issues. The October programs included a discussion of “Women as Persons” and “Women in Religion”, but November was devoted to four successive Sundays of “Man’s Search for Meaning”, through “humanism”, “his own body”, “myth and ritual” and “the arts”.

A new division of labour was introduced with the September meeting this year, and that was the creation of the position of “service leader”. The active program committee retained responsibility for the topic of the discussion, while individual members assumed the task of opening and closing the service, and arranging for readings, and music. The children began attending the first 20 minutes of the adult program. The special stories and visual demonstrations produced for them by the service leaders proved just as captivating to the adult members.

The Chaplain achieved a goal she had been pursuing for some months when she took delivery of 100 wedding certificate blanks from a local printer. The certificates were designed for use by any Unitarian group in Saskatchewan, and some were sold to the Regina Fellowship.

Interest and participation in Western District activities had progressed to the point that the Canadian Fellowships joined to support the nomination of Jane Bramadat of the Winnipeg congregation to represent the combined American and Canadian western districts on the UUA Board. The chaplain and Debby Lake attended the CUC Meeting in Toronto and found the experience interesting and informative, but also found it “evident that the problems of churches and larger fellowships are not pertinent to us”. Differences of geography and scale, however, did not interfere with the Saskatoon Fellowship’s support of the national organization, and Debby and Pat were proud to wear their “Annual Program Fund Honor Society” blue ribbons at the meeting, indicating that the Fellowship’s contribution to the CUC was over \$7 per member.

In October a burglar stole several items including the entire stereo system. Subsequently all locks were improved and the stereo replaced with a system that introduced a piece of new technology into services, a cassette tape deck.

The Fellowship was saddened by the death of one of the charter members in 1979, Reba Coburn. Reba had been the first “Sunday School Superintendent” of the infant Fellowship.

At the Annual Meeting the following officers were elected:

President	Glenn Fulton
Vice-President (Program)	Carl von Baeyer
Secretary.	Chris Allister
Treasurer	Ann Coxworth
Building <i>and</i> Property	Dennis Harley
<i>Challenge</i>	Aleida Windsor
Publicity	Dale Hackinen
Hospitality <i>and</i> Membership .	Gloria Boerma
Sunday School	Debby Lake
Chaplain	Pat Adams
Auditor	Pat Adams

Unitarians: 1980

The tradition of the January goal-setting session was firmly established by now. The “not quite New Year’s resolutions” formulated in 1980 were concerned with continuing the interest groups, getting the good news about the Fellowship out to the outside world in the hope that the publicity would help the Fellowship grow, continuing the revitalized Religious Education program and the improvement of their basement quarters. In the adult program, it was resolved to integrate the interest in social action or “ethics in action” by having speakers from community agencies and to delve into the issue of professional leadership for the Fellowship.

It was felt that the frequently expressed wish of the members that the Fellowship would grow in numbers, and the desire to intensify the spiritual or religious content of the Fellowship, required, or would at least be greatly assisted by, professional leadership.

In April the Fellowship met for a weekend of discussion with Emil Gudmundson, and considered the various leadership options open to them. The Fellowship as a whole was canvassed over the summer to garner as broad a range of opinion as possible, and a special general meeting was held in September to reach a collective decision. The membership chose to participate in the UUA Weekend Ministry Program, and a stimulating weekend in November was spent with Reverend Dr. Patrick O’Neill discussing the Unitarian tradition of dissent and affirmation.

The trend toward the religious in the Fellowship was not without its checks and balances, however. Discussion of the content for the new sign required to replace the one that had been vandalized in 1979 revealed that the group was about equally divided between those who were attracted and those who were repelled by the idea of referring to the Centre as a “church”. The forces of conservatism prevailed, and the change of title was not made. On another plane altogether, the October issue of the *Challenge* referred to a program dealing with Jung’s archetype of the self as “A Spark of the Codhead”. We presume that it was a typographical error, but we are prepared to entertain the notion that it was an editorial comment.

Associations with other Unitarian individuals and groups continued not only pleasant but profitable. The commitment to host the biennial prairie Galaxy Conference undertaken in 1978 was carried out successfully in a delightful (though wet) weekend in the Qu'Appelle Valley. The conference, organized by Herman Boerma, actually made a profit, which was returned to the WDCUC for further conferences.

In 1980 most of the interest from the Memorial Fund was granted to the Saskatoon Native Women's Association to help with the development of the Native Survival School. A small grant was also made to the International Association for Religious Freedom.

Members from the Saskatoon Fellowship visited Wynyard to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Icelandic Unitarian Church with Unitarians there, and sent a delegate to a UUA conference in Michigan on Women and Religion. Judith Gidluck, who along with her husband Ivan had taken over editing the *Challenge* after Aleida Windsor left to work in northern Saskatchewan, came back inspired, according to her report.

Pat Adams and Frank Coburn gave the Sunday Services a sense of continuity and grace by alternating in the role of service leader.

The following executive for 1981 was elected at the November Annual General Meeting:

President	Carl von Baeyer
Vice-president	Judith Gidluck
Program	Glenn Fulton
	(volunteered at a later executive meeting)
Secretary	Ann Coxworth
Treasurer	Jack Adams
Property	Ivan Gidluck
<i>Challenge</i>	Ivan and Judith Gidluck
Membership/Hospitality	Yu-Lin Pas
Publicity	Dale Hackinen
Chaplain	Pat Adams
Religious Education	Debby Lake
WDCUC Board Member	Glenn Fulton
Nursery and Pre-School	Terry Campbell, Judy Hackinen
Finance Chairman (added in May, 1981)	Frank Coburn

Unitarians: 1981

In 1981 the Fellowship could look back on 25 years of continuous history. The internal life of the Fellowship seems to be made up in equal parts of social action, religious thought, housekeeping and financing. None can go forward without the others, although in anyone year one or two may receive, or demand, more attention than the others. Certainly the neglect of anyone soon creates a demand for a redress of the balance.

1981 was no exception. The year opened with the second of the Reverend Dr. Patrick O'Neill's "weekend ministry" visits to the Fellowship, and was punctuated in mid-year with

a solemn warning from the building manager (Ivan Gidluck) that the Fellowship had to stop coasting on their paid-up mortgage and face up to some costly and overdue repairs to the Centre. Lest any member think that a “hidden agenda” existed to divert money raised for repairs into a ministerial fund, he invoked the Fire Inspector’s authority, and presented the members with a horrendous list of repairs needed to meet the new regulations.

In spite of the “housekeeping” concerns looming over them, members of the Fellowship found P. O’Neill’s second and third visits immensely satisfying to the spirit and the mind. He also very quickly became “Patrick” to those who attended the weekend sessions. A practical outcome of Dr. O’Neill’s visit was the reaffirmation of two of the central concerns of the Fellowship—lay leadership and program—and a renewal of the resolution to develop ways of meeting these basic needs.

Three social action agencies were chosen for support from the Memorial Fund: a MATCH project in India supporting education of village midwives, the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League, and Planned Parenthood Saskatoon. In retrospect the combination of projects seems ironic.

The Fellowship’s cautious steps towards professional leadership begun with the invitation to Rev. O’Neill, continued with the submission of an application to the Unitarian Universalist Association for a six-week “Minister-on-loan” in 1982.

The Fellowship continues to mean many things to its (very) various members. The analysis of the survey conducted in 1980 revealed that the ten most important functions were:

- Fellowship with people I enjoy
- Conducting “passages” (marriage, naming, memorials, etc.)
- Promotion of liberal religion and religious freedom
- A forum to consider philosophical and religious questions
- Providing religious education to children
- Providing the opportunity to engage in discussion
- A stimulus and help in clarifying my values
- Help in formulating my personal religion
- Providing religious education to adults
- Festive celebrations (e.g., Christmas and Easter services)

These were, at any rate, the ten most important functions for the 33 people who responded to the questionnaire. In any case, it is difficult to abstract “functions” from “fellowship”. In the 25 years since Bill Etches and Garth Buhler met to take the first steps in its creation, a Saskatoon Unitarian Fellowship has indeed been forged, which binds, and is bound by, its members.

**GALLERY OF SELECTED DOCUMENTS FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE
FELLOWSHIP: 1956-1981**

Financial statement for 1956-57

<i>Income</i>		<i>Expenditures</i>	
By pledges	\$ 854.34	Operating expenses	\$ 721.21
By collections	343.92	United Appeal	145.22
		Unitarian Service Committee	36.00
Total income	<u>\$1198.27</u>	Carryover to 1957/58	295.84
			<hr/>
			<u>\$1198.27</u>

Budget for 1981 (Rounded figures)

<i>Income</i>		<i>Expenditures</i>	
Donations	\$ 3875	Administration	\$ 450
Building Use	3000	Dues, conferences	1000
Interest	400	Program	1000
Building Fund Drive (added to budget in June)	4000	Sunday School	200
Memorial Fund interest	700	Hospitality	175
	<hr/>	Advertising	1100
INCOME FOR YEAR	11975	Challenge	350
Carryover from 1980	4500	Building (including special repairs)	7000
Memorial Fund principal	6000	Social action (from Memorial Fund interest)	700
			<hr/>
		EXPENDITURES FOR YEAR	11975
		Carryover to 1982	4500
		Memorial Fund principal	6000

Sunday Programs for 1956-57

Sept.	9	Dr. F. E. Coburn	Love
	16	A.A. Bailey	What is religious experience?
	23		A psychiatrist looks at ethics
	30	Rev. Geo. Yeager	The faith of Unitarians
Oct.	7		The Dead Sea Scrolls
	14	?	
	21	Rev. Charles Eddis asst. Rev. Charles Petursson	Who are these Unitarians?
	28		Scientific approach to truth
Nov.	4	Mr. S.P. Pant	Hinduism
	11	(No meeting)	
	18	Dr. A. Hoffer	Philosophy of Science
	25		What Unitarians believe about sin and guilt- A record by Rev. Rich. Henry
Dec.	2	Mr. C. Roles (World Federalists, Saskatoon)	World Government
	9	Dr. A.S. perlin	Hebrew religious music
	16		A Christmas message
	23	(No meeting)	
	30	Mr. Percy Wright	Einstein's cosmic religion
Jan.	6	?	
	13	Mr. Don Bailey	The valiant
	20		The natural and super natural in religion
	27		Unitarian objectives
Feb.	3	Gavin McDowell	The business of is-ness
	10	Mr. Dick Stanton	The Baha'i World Faith
	17	Dr. F.E. Coburn	Immortality
	24	Dr. P.J. Thair	The Jefferson Bible
Mar.	3	Rev. C.W. Eddis	Rev. Dr. A. Powell Davies—Spokesman for liberal religion
	10	Dr. Henry Cooper- stock	Ethics in society
	17	Prof. Eli Bornstein	Art, knowledge and nature
	24	Mr. Don Bailey	The life and thought of Albert Schweitzer
	31	?	

April	7	Mr. Melville Reid	Whither, whence, and why? A study of reincarnation
	14	Mr. Donald Bailey	The life and thought of Albert Schweitzer, Part 2
	21	Dr. Frank Coburn	Historical Easter
	28		Open discussion—Unitarian point of view
May	5	Mrs. H. Ducie and Miss Rose Ducie	Religion and politics
	12		What is religious authority?
	19	Mr. G.A. McDowell	To rust, unburnish'd
	26		Open discussion—Pacificism
June	2	Mr. G.W. Leckie	Religion as an instrument of power
	9	Dr. Guy Richards	Humanism
	16	Dr. F.E. Coburn	Plagiarizing Dr. Brock Chisholm
	23	Mr. Jim Wright	Indians of Northwest Canada

Sunday Programs for 1980-81

Sept.	7		Welcome back & Fellowship
	14		General meeting—Steps Toward Growth
	21	Mike Wilson & Franziska Turel	Judaism and some Israeli dances
	28	Franziska Turel	The possible origin of the concept of a personal God
Oct.	5	Marianne Johnson	Jung's archetype of the self—A spark of the Godhead
	12		Thanksgiving service. Pat Adams' slides of Sri Lanka; Potluck supper
	19	Glenn Fulton & others	The feel of church—The Unitarian alternative
	26	Eva Wetzel	On marriage, with a model of two-person relationships
Nov.	2		Annual General Meeting
	9	Frank Coburn	The resurgent right
	16	Rev. Dr. Patrick O'Neill	Unitarianism—The best kept secret in North America
	23		Abortion—CUC Issue of the Year
	30		Faith and wholeness—A panel led by Violet Strom
Dec.	7		Christmas party
	14	Joanna Miller & Ewen Coxworth	Our shrinking global conscience. Part 2
	21	(No meeting)	
	24		Christmas eve service
	28	(No meeting)	

Jan	4	(No meeting)	
	11	Judith Gidluck	Changing of the Gods—A feminist approach to religion
	18	Judy Martin	Daycare
	25	Deborah Lake	Loneliness
Feb.	1	Rev. Dr. Patrick O'Neill	Tolerance
	8	Dale Hackinen	Dialogue on Unitarianism
	15	Carl von Baeyer	Red dust and palm oil—5 stories of a visit to Cameroon
	22	Dr. N. Bakhshi	A look at Hinduism
Mar.	1		Snow Fun on river bank
	8	Joanna Miller	Two Thousand AD—Global chaos or global community
	15	Violet Strom	The space makers—Making psychic space for others
	22	Franziska Turel	Evolutionism vs. Creationism—OR: science vs. religion
	29	Rev. Dr. Patrick O'Neill	Science and religion: Where do the twain meet?
April	5	Nancy Allen & Marjorie Woloshyn	El Salvador
	12	Linda Shepherdson	Canadian Abortion Rights Action League—A slide-tape presentation
	19	Sid Hayes, Deborah Lake, & Glenn Fulton	A Unitarian Easter Celebration—The origin of Easter; pysanky & Potluck
	26	Dr. Julian Pas	The Taoist View of Life
May	3		General Meeting—professional leadership
	10		Spring wind-up: Intergenerational service
June	14	Judith Gidluck	Eve reconsidered—A slide-tape presentation
July	12	Carl von Baeyer	Meditation and argument on Matthew 25:34-40
Aug.	14	Dale Hackinen	Audiotape on Unitarian-Universalist beliefs

MINUTES OF THE BUILDING COMMITTEE: September 28, 1964 (Excerpts)

The Building Committee met on September 28, first at the Free Methodist Church at the corner of Eastlake and Main and later the home of Allan Bailey. Present were Garth McDowell, Alex Kavadas, Allan Bailey, Jo Stuesser, Al Rogers, Phil Thair, Brian O'Regan, Charlotte Etches and Lenore Price. Mavis Carleton, a member of the Fellowship and a real estate agent attended these two sessions in her capacity as agent for the Free Methodist Church property and as an advisor. Don Adams came to examine the foundations of the building, and he reported these to be sound and showing no decay. A few other members of the Fellowship also inspected the building at that time.

This F.M. church building has been up for sale for about a year at \$25,000. The asking price has been dropped to 20,000 quite recently, with a resulting increase in purchase interest. A recent offer by another group to purchase the property for \$15,000 had been turned down by the Free Methodist Board. The evidence seemed to indicate that this building would sell quite soon.

The Building Committee found the F.M.C. building worth recommending to the Fellowship, primarily because it was reasonably adequate for present needs and because it was definitely more feasible [sic] financially than the construction of a new building, as formerly approved by the membership, in view of the results of the financial drive.

The adult assembly hall will accomodate [sic] our present numbers with only slight room for the expansion in attendance. The religious education area in the basement is too small, being smaller than the space used at the YMCA at present. However, the possibility of renting additional space for the children somewhere [sic] in the neighbourhood or of building an addition of two or so rooms at the back of the lot seemed quite possible. The advantage of having a building which the present membership could afford to carry and to payoff in a reasonable period of time outweighed the disadvantages of this building, it was generally felt.

Allan Bailey offered to personally risk the deposit of up to \$500 on an offer to purchase this building. He emphasized that he undertook this as a personal risk which in no way was to bind the decision of the Fellowship members.

There was general agreement that the transaction should be through a real estate agent instead of dealing with the present owners directly, in case there should be any hesitation to accept because of the different religious position of the two groups involved, even if this meant that the cost to us must then be raised by the amount of the agent's commission

Allan Bailey then made the motion that the Building Committee recommends that the Unitarian Fellowship purchase the Free Methodist Church at the corner of Eastlake and Main for \$18,000, and, in order to make secure this property for a period of time until a meeting of the Fellowship, that the offer be secured with \$350 deposit at no risk to the congregation. This was seconded by Jo Stuesser and it was passed unanimously.

SAMPLE LETTER FROM A SPONSORED ORPHAN

Unitarian Fellowship
 Sunday school
 c/o Mrs. Diana Wright
 Sub P.O. 13
 Saskatoon, Sask.

KL-59 Kim Hae Ja
 Sun Ae Orphanage
 #91 Gan Sak Dong
 Inchon, Korea
 Date June 15, 1962

라이트 선생님과 여러 주일학교 친구들에게
 고안 안녕들 하세요?
 나의 편지는 잘 받아 보았는 지요?
 우리집 정원에는 벌써 여름철의 꽃들이 싱싱하게 자라나고
 있습니다 특히 장미꽃이 제일 탐스럽고 예뻐요.
 하가지 다녀 캐나다에 있는 여러 동무들에게 보이로 하여요
 우리나라에는 기다리고 기다리면 이가 내려서 6월의 아열
 무내기가 시작 됩니다. 우리학교 에도 상급 생들이 농우들을
 도와주고 모를 심으러 갔었어요. 이제 얼마 안 있으면 여름 방
 학이 돌아옵니다. 여름 방학이 으면 나는 들로 산으로 또는 바다로
 다니며 식물 채집과 곤충채집 체험과 조개를 잡으려고 해요
 동무들은 여름 방학에 무엇을 하느니 군요해요. 그러면 오늘은 이만
 보겠어요. 하나님의 은총이 항상같이 하심을 믿고 있습니다
 4295년 6월 14일
 김혜자 올림

Dear teacher Wright and all my friends in Church School:

How are you, did you received my last letter? Our summer flowers are bloom-
 ing already in our garden and especially the rose is most desirable and beautiful
 one. I wish to show you them. We had long-awaited rain here in June and so the
 farmers started busy for transplanting rice in their rice-fields. The upper most
 grade students in our school went to farm to help them. We will have our summer
 vacation in few weeks. During our holidays I will enjoy climbing mountain, swim-
 ming at the sea, dig up clams at the sea-side and plant or insect-collection.
 Do you have any plan for your holidays too? Well, I'll close now, good bye.
 May God's blessing be with you always,

Your loving friends


Hae Ja

혜자

SAMPLE SERVICE ADVERTISEMENTS FROM 1968

Feb. 26

1968 ADVERTISEMENTS 64



Come and Hear at 11.00 a.m.
"L.R.Y.-ers SPEAK"
 (Liberal Religious Youth)
**UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP
 OF SASKATOON**
 502 Main Street (One Block West of Broadway)
 Sunday School for Ages 4-14
 at 9.30 a.m.

For information and literature about Unitarianism, write
 P.O. Box 1502, Saskatoon.

Jan. 15



Come and Hear at 11.00 a.m.
Rev. Bert Watson
 Unitarian Minister from Scotland
**UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP
 OF SASKATOON**
 502 Main Street (One Block West of Broadway)
 Sunday School for Ages 4-14
 at 9.30 a.m.

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 P.O. Box 1502, Saskatoon.

"Why build these cities glorious if man unbuilded goes,
 In vain we build the world unless the builder also grows."

Jan. 29




Come and Hear at 11.00 a.m.
"THIS GENERATION SPEAKS"
 An interview with some of
 Saskatoon's Teenagers

Special Guests:
 DENNIS BUCKERT, SYLVIA TISNIC,
 KAY GOODWIN,
 FOLKINGER - MISS NANCY WARD
 Sunday School for Ages 4-14 at 9.30 a.m.

For information and literature about Unitarianism, write
 P.O. Box 1502, Saskatoon.

Mar. 3



We invite you to hear at 11.15 a.m.
MAX GRASELY
**"CHANGE AND REFORM IN
 EDUCATION IN SASKATOON"**


A discussion of proposed changes and
 present problems in Saskatoon schools
 will follow Mr. Graseley's presentation.

**UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP
 OF SASKATOON**
 502 Main St. (one block west of Broadway)
 Sunday School for All Ages 4-14 at 9.30 a.m.

For information and literature about Unitarianism, write
 P.O. Box 1502, Saskatoon.

"Why build these cities glorious if man unbuilded goes,
 In vain we build the world unless the builder also grows."

Feb. 7



Come and Hear at 11.00 a.m.
**"The Modern
 Theologian's Dilemma"**
Prof. R. W. Krutzen
 Sunday School for Ages 4-14 at 9.30 a.m.

For information and literature about Unitarianism, write
 P.O. Box 1502, Saskatoon.

**Special
 course
 offered**

The Unitarian Sunday
 School in Saskatoon will offer
 a course in sex education,
 starting Sunday. The course
 will be conducted by Dr. John

The children involved in
 program range in ages from
 8 to 13, although younger chil-
 dren from age four upwards
 will attend the first ses-
 sion which will involve dis-
 section of animals and a factual
 presentation of the anatomy
 of the reproductive process.
 This program will
 place during the regular
 day School hour, 9.30 - 10.30
 a.m. in the Unitarian Centre
 at 502 Main Street.

"South Pacific Paradise"
 Illustrated Travelogue on Austr-
 alia, New Zealand, Fiji, Hawaii.
 Dr. Phil Thair, 7.30 p.m.
 Unitarian Centre, 502 Main Street,
 Sat., Dec. 7

Mar. 15

We invite you to hear at 11.15 a.m.

Prof. JIM NAYLOR

"University-Government Relations"

Prof. Naylor will speak on the effects of the growing reliance of universities on extensive government financing and the problems this creates in the maintenance of traditional academic freedom. This is a country-wide if not an international problem and will be discussed in its broader aspects.



UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP OF SASKATOON

502 Main St. (one block west of Broadway)
Sunday School for All Ages 4-14 at 9.30 a.m.

For information and literature about Unitarianism, write: P.O. Box 1502, Saskatoon
"Your daily life is your temple and your religion. Whenever you enter into it take with you your all."

Mar. 17

We invite you to hear at 11.15 a.m.

Judge Tillie Taylor

'Penal Reform'

Judge Taylor will be talking about the need for reform in our Criminal Code, Liquor Legislation and Penal Institutions particularly as they apply to young people.



UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP OF SASKATOON

502 Main St. (one block west of Broadway)
Sunday School for All Ages 4-14 at 9.30 a.m.

For information and literature about Unitarianism, write: P.O. Box 1502, Saskatoon
"The Deed is More Important Than the Creed"

Mar. 24

COME AND HEAR AT 11 A.M.

A Panel Discussion
"The Health Problems of Indians and Eskimos"

UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP OF SASKATOON

502 Main St. (one block west of Broadway)
Sunday School for All Ages 4-14 at 9.30 a.m.

For information and literature about Unitarianism, write P.O. Box 1502, Saskatoon
"The Deed is More Important Than the Creed"



1968 ADVERTISEMENTS

Mar. 31

65

COME AND HEAR AT 11.15 A.M.

DR. LINVIL WATSON

"Protagorean View of Religion"

UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP OF SASKATOON

502 Main St. (one block west of Broadway)
Sunday School for All Ages 4-14 at 9.30 a.m.

For information and literature about Unitarianism, write P.O. Box 1502, Saskatoon
"The Deed is More Important Than the Creed"



April 7

Unitarian

We invite you at 11.15 a.m.

"Communing With Nature"

STUART HOUSTON

Dr. Houston is a well known local naturalist. He will be showing slides and talking about wildlife and conservation, and why he finds wildlife interesting.

UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP OF SASKATOON

502 Main St. (one block west of Broadway)
Sunday School for All Ages 4-14 at 9.30 a.m.

For information and literature about Unitarianism, write: P.O. Box 1502, Saskatoon

"When I would begot content and increase confidence in the power and wisdom and providence of Almighty God, I will walk the meadows by some gliding stream, and there contemplate the lilies that take no care, and those very many other little living creatures that are not only created, but fed (man knows not how) by the goodness of the God of Nature, and therefore trust in Him." Isaac Walton.



April 21 - cancelled

Come and Hear at 11.15 a.m.

"The Meaning of Martin Luther King"

UNITARIAN FELLOWSHIP OF SASKATOON

502 Main Street (One Block West of Broadway)

For information and literature about Unitarianism, write: P.O. Box 1502, Saskatoon

"RELIGION IS WHAT THE INDIVIDUAL DOES WITH HIS OWN SOLITARINESS" —Alfred North Whitehead



April 28

Come and Hear at 11.15 a.m.

"Non-Violence and the"



PSALM FOR THE TWENTY-FIFTH

By Michael Wilson

For chorus of mixed voices, unaccompanied; set to the psalm tune "Desert"

There is a small seceding sect,
To thinking folk a boon,
Rich with obscure fellowships,
And one in Saskatoon!

Through twenty-five successive years
It's scarcely shrunk nor grown,
Once burned and shy of ministers
We've done it on our own.

But at the quarter century
Still not (in size) full grown
Concerned, tired, courageous, we'll accept
A minister on loan

(performed by the Saskatoon Unitarian Choral Group on September 26, 1981)