

CHAPTER SIX: 1990 – 1995 Building and More

by Marian Lowry with Midge Mack

Two primary principles were stated by Trinity's members when the congregation was founded: that Trinity's doors would be open to any and all, and that all members were to be ministers. Trinity remains true to these principles to the time of this writing (in 2005).

As we lived into the 90s, the Strategic Plan of 1988 and subsequent six task forces culminated with a 1994 convocation to help us know what we needed in a building in order to meet our goals. More committees decided how it would be financed and what it would look like so that we could make the final commitment to building. **Ground was broken in November 1995 for an approximately \$1.4 million sanctuary unit** that included a suite of offices, music rehearsal room, atrium, conference room, and narthex. In spite of springtime rain delays the building was finished in 54 weeks, within budget, enhanced by \$20,000 in gifts of furnishings and \$18,000 in volunteer efforts by some 60 members.

But we'd been growing in other ways, as well. A mid-1990s snapshot of Trinity would include these features:

- The well-known Bible study **Kerygma** (proclamation), ably taught by pastor **Al Kissling**;
- Our **Koinonia** (times of fellowship) ranging from Sunday evening suppers to hiking, bridge, etc.;
- Our **Memorial Garden**, now landscaped and frequently used for receiving ashes of deceased members;
- A **used van** to transport youth;
- New **copying equipment** in the office;
- Growth in **numbers** (peaking at 543) as retirees from the north discovered us;
- More **commitment to our community** through service and funding of the town's social agencies, many of which we had helped start;
- Growth in **staff**: though it was hard to say farewell to DCE Kate Weinman Fisher in 1990 and Associate Pastor Jon Brown in 1994, we welcomed **Ed Forsyth** as DCE in 1991, **Gene Witherspoon** as Parish Visitor in 1993, **Margie and Frank Boyd** as Associate Pastor and Youth Director in 1995.

“Contemporary” worship (a “middle service” at 10 AM) was added to our worship schedule in 1994, led by Jon, then Ed, Gene and Margie. The work of the Deacons was now augmented by the **Trinity Angels** who adopted housebound members for special ministry. We established **The Year of the Child** as a focus in 1994, a portent of good things to come. Our Christian Education program served some 100 students and three adult classes.

Even our finances were streamlined. When **George Mack** became Treasurer, finance activities were brought back in-house and computerized. **Kathy Wilde** was hired as bookkeeper. Throughout these years, our mission dollars (22% of all monies received) supported 14 worldwide and local causes.

Yet crises began to surface: 1) We invited a noted Presbyterian lesbian, the Reverend Jane Spahr, to preach, thus learning that not all our members understood our “open to all” policy; 2) Shortly thereafter our pastor developed eye problems resulting in the loss of sight in one eye. And 3), there were those who had not wanted us to build, who were beginning to drift away.

Goals for the 1990s:

1. Every member is committed to growing as a disciple of Christ and steward of God’s gifts;
2. Each member is known and cared for;
3. Worship services are challenging, stimulating, and meeting diverse needs of the members;
4. Challenging learning opportunities exist for all our people;
5. We communicate our message (*kerygma*) through a servant ministry to the needs of a changing world, local and global;
6. We have adequate and accessible facilities available to meet the needs of our diverse programs.