

Snapshot of the First Year (1975-1976) as the Redlands United Church of Christ
By Kathie Blakley, August 2009, using information compiled by Dr. Don Kleckner from records kept by Barbara Hauser, Church Clerk, and scrapbook information by Frances Collins.



Meeting in Weeks Hall in 1976

The first official meeting of the new Redlands United Church of Christ was held June 26, 1975 at the Morey House in Redlands which was the home of members, Curtiss and Phyllis Allen.

The first meeting at the First United Methodist Church was June 29, 1975. The RUCC met for **Sunday Services** at the First United Methodist Church Sanctuary (1 E. Olive, Redlands). Services were at 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, and during the summer the service time was moved to 7:00 pm.

The **church staff** was:

Ministers: Rev. Bruce Van Blair, Senior Minister, Rev. Richard Blakley, Assoc. Minister

Secretary: Martha Romero

Director of Music: Mariana Van Blair

Organist: Rick England (until Sept.), followed by Ann Christensen

Ordinations:

Sept. 12, 1976 Rick Skidmore

Sept. 26, 1976 Richard Blakley

Officers:

President: Dr. A. Gordon Reynolds

V.P. (Chair/ Board of Trustees): Lloyd Hopper

Financial Secretary: Betty Jacobs

Clerk: Barbara Hauser

Deacons in Charge of **Program Areas**:

Christian Education: Kathie Blakley, Jane Hurley

Evangelism: Curtiss Allen, Eric Naftzger

Group Life: Sandi Arth, Polly Reynolds

Representatives: Kirk Dewey, Dave Traber

Samaritans: Virginia Hopper, Carole Beswick

Worship: Ken Hurley

Shepherds: Helen Arth, Richard Hardy

Fine Arts: Bill Dean

Youth: Roy Hargrave, Bill Stanley

Shepherds: Helen Arth, Art Bomers, Paul Cassen, Beverly Dean, Carol Gavan, Galilee Glanville, Richard Hardy, Julia Hinckley, Helen Montgomery, Eric Naftzger, Betty Rothenberger, Ellen Stanley. Each Shepherd was in charge of a “flock” (a group of members).

The RUCC **Budget** receipts totaled \$52,792, and a total of \$6,778 was spent from this on **Outreach**. By the end of the year, the **Building Fund** totaled \$7961.00.

Membership: There were **147 Covenants**, with 19 new members being added during the year and 3 deaths (Robert Jamison, Rex Congleton, Anna Dederer). Four children were born to members (Benjamin Blakley, Matthew Hargrave, Wendy Naftzger, and Kimberly Arth) and there were four children baptized (Deborah Hurley, Benjamin Blakley, Matthew Hargrave, and Wendy Naftzger). Justin Orr is recorded as the first child baptized by the new RUCC on November 20, 1975.

Committee Activities:

Christian Education: There were 30 children registered in the Sunday school, with 5 infants on the “Cradle Roll”. Children sat with their families during the Sunday Service until sermon time, when they were dismissed for “Discovery Time” learning. A 2 weeks Vacation Bible School was held in mid July under the leadership of Jane Hurley and Kathie Blakley.

Samaritans: The Samaritan group sponsored a Vietnamese refugee, Phuong Vu and her mother. They also worked with the Family Services Association, and the House of Neighborly Service.

Fine Arts: New choir robes were made by the members in various shades of blue, and stoles were donated anonymously. An Art Show was held in the Methodist gathering area, and new U.C.C. Hymnals were purchased.

Evangelism: Sponsored the "Order of the Plow".

Worship: Began Prayer Partners program, and name tags.

Youth: The active Youth Group of 20 + members was led by Rev. Rich Blakley. They worked on service projects at a Mexican orphanage, held a canned food drive, produced a traveling show, and held a parent dinner. The annual Youth service was held May 23 with the theme "Together We Are God's Youth". There was a symbolic "foot washing" during the service, followed by an actual foot washing in the patio afterwards. They capped their activities with a Bike Hike from Redlands to Carlsbad in August.

Representatives: The Representatives sent representatives to all local and denominational meetings. They worked to ensure that a tenth of the church's budget went to Outreach Activities. Loyd Hopper worked on the UCC Conference's Farm Labor Task Force.

Study groups:

The "**Thursday Afternoon**" group, began in 1975, and met Thursday afternoons at Carole Beswick's home. The leader was Bruce van Blair, and their study area was the gospel of Luke.

Other study groups that continued were the **Mary/Martha/ Lazarus Study Group** held at Plymouth Village, and the **Alpha Bible Study Group**.

Barnraisers was organized on August 21 and elected Joel Hauser as group President and Bill Stanley as Program Chair. Its purpose was to provide a Men's Fellowship and Study time, and to provide service by doing odd jobs for members and others.

Events and Social Activities:

The Ice Cream Social was held at the home of Betty and Dick Hardy in July.

A **Fall Retreat** was held at Pilgrim Pines

The "**Gathering of the Greens**" Advent Workshop was sponsored by the C.E. Committee and welcomed all the church family for Christmas crafts and Carol singing.

The **formal welcome of the RUCC into the San Bernardino Association** of the UCC was held on Feb. 29, 1976 in the First Methodist Church Sanctuary. It featured a sermon by UCC Conference Minister, Dr. Fred Register, and a reception in the Gathering Area hosted by Group Life.

A **Lenten Series** was held as a cooperative event with the Methodists. There was a 6:30 p.m. dinner, followed by a 7:30 discussion. Shepherds' groups took turns preparing the meal. The price was \$1.00 for adults, 50 cents for children. The theme was "Dying Your Way into Life."

A Salad luncheon was held June 13, 1976 to honor the **50th Wedding Anniversary of Loyd and Virginia Hopper**.

Many members worked in **renovating a house at 225 Alvarado St. for the van Blairs**. It was a surprise to them on their return from a month's vacation and camp Ministry in July.

Another faithful activity was to create a miniature replica "**doll house**" of the Edward's House. This project was led by Bill Dean and John Brady. It was raffled on Dec. 1, with the proceeds of \$4000 going to the Building Fund. The doll house winner was Jenny Young.

Other firsts (from 1977):

Women's Fellowship was organized on May 21, 1977. The first president was Barbara Hauser. It first met bi-monthly on Saturday afternoons. Craft groups were led by Ann Caples, Helen Montgomery, and Margaret Barnett. A Church lending library was begun by Jean Millar and Gertrude Hodson.