

Transcription of Groundbreaking Ceremony

Members of the UUFHC

August 14, 1994

Abstract

On August 14, 1994 a groundbreaking ceremony was held at the new location for UUFHC at 2515 Churchville Road, Churchville, Maryland.



BOARD PRESIDENT RUTH SHERIDAN: I'd like to introduce to you our guests and friends who are with us today, some of whom if they hadn't helped we just wouldn't be here.

When I call your name will you kind of wave your hand so we can acknowledge you? From our architect's office, Gary Getz, Terry Taylor, and Joel Warner. From our art engineering company of George W. Stevens, Paul Taylor. Maude-line, and I guess Walter isn't here, Walter Banks, who sold us this lovely parcel of land and whose family roots go back into Harford County for a long time. The Reverend Pat Carroll, district consultant of the Joseph Priestley District of the Unitarian Universalist Association. Liz Baxwell, past president of the Joseph Priestley District. Mary Zimmerman, from Cedar Lane

UU Church. Judy Stagg, from Fairfax Unitarian Universalist Church. Hope and John Harrison, from Restoration Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Philadelphia. Sadie and Bill Curtis, from the Annapolis UU Congregation. And Sadie is our district liaison to the Joseph Priestley District, so she'll be seeing us more in the future, I'm sure. Alan Evans and Anita, from the Towson UU Church. And I don't think Matthew McNaughton is here, he said he might come. But you've got Lloyd Merkin and another member of Cedar Lane who would say he would come. Okay, great. From the Harford County Delegation, Delegate Mary Louise Price. Senator Amos, did you just walk in? Delegate Donald Fry here. If he is, then we'll talk. From the Harford County Council, Councilwoman Joanne Perrin and Judy.

And Councilwoman Theresa Cleo. And County Council Attorney Ed Andrews. And from our soon-to-be, we hope, contractors, representing the Harborview contractors, Charles Humes, who is a Cecil County neighbor, and a member of the church down the road. Now I'd like to ask Pat Carroll, our JP District Consultant, to give us a few words.

PAT CAROL: It is an absolute delight to be here among you, and it occurs to me that it's extremely significant that this gathering is happening at the same time as Woodstock, because we've come back to the farm to set our souls free! And they say about Woodstock, too, that they've come back to the farm also to set their pocket-books free or their wallets free, that things cost so much more now. And I believe you can probably attest that that is true of this project, too. And I want to tell you that I'm proud of you for making this leap, this statement of faith, this statement of courage and of tenacity, and I pray that it will continue to be that way for you, that you will continue to have that enthusiasm and courage and tenacity and great faith. Blessings on this day. Thank you. In the spirit of love may we bloom and grow, bloom and grow forever.

JOE WESLEY AND DAUGHTER: [singing] Bless this time, bless this space, bless our dreaming together. Bless this time, bless this space, bless our dreaming together. May our strength join as one as we go forward together. In the spirit of love may we bloom and grow, bloom and grow forever. Bless this time, bless this space, bless our dreaming together. Amen.

DYRCK VAN DUSEN: Oh, I can't tell you how grateful I am to see this day finally get here. This, as most of you know, this has been about a five-year project so far, and on behalf of the Building Committee, I've been asked to come up and say a few words, and all I can think of is how grateful, how truly thankful I am for all of you. The Building Committee for this Fellowship is one of the largest committees in the church. It's surpassed only by the Human Concerns Committee in terms of numbers of people. But we've been very fortunate to have had input from ev-

erybody, and from even non-members. I see some of our friends from Towson and whatnot who've been just a tremendous help to us. I'm not going to go through everybody's names, because to do so would probably take me half the five years it took us to get here. I just want to let everyone know how truly grateful I am for your help in putting together this project. I think we're going to have a beautiful church. I'm really looking forward to working with you to help bring it all together. We've got the team now, and we're going to make this bear happen. Thank you.

REV. ALICE WESLEY: Great human accomplishments come to be only when people have dreams together. We have a dream, a vision of the authentically free religious community. What do we mean by religious? We mean very simply caring about what in our lives and the world is worthy of our love, our energy, our money, our loyalty. What do we mean by free? Certainly not that it costs nothing. The offering plate is over by the place where the door is in the sanctuary, and there's a nice rock there to hold your check down if you'd like to put something in it today. Whatever is truly worthy will probably cost a lot, especially in money and time.

By free we don't mean cheap. By free we mean without any coercion whatsoever, save that of the unfettered conscience, the thoughtful mind, the loving heart.

What do we mean by authentic? When a free religious community is authentic by our life, it's freely cooperative, democratic in governance, committed to justice, open to all who would join in what seems to them like a healthy way of life, committed to reason and tolerance and service in the name of love. We here have need of an authentic religious community, and we just can't help believing the world needs us to model this kind of common life.

And so we have dreamed of having more space, attractive, handsome space, where others can join us in living a richly authentic, free human life. And that's why we're here today and why we're ready to dig in.

Let me tell you how we're going to do that digging in. Over there, there are a couple of stakes with streamers attached, which mark, more or less, the front door of the building. Then you see a U with little sticks with little flags on them. We're going to go from here and take our shovels and picks. Everybody, we want all the kids too. And if you don't have a shovel, go. Maybe somebody will have an extra, but we want everybody in the picture. Go and follow Glenn Brown, he's going to lead the way. Go through the front doors and then into what will be the sanctuary area. Now, when it's built and we're in the sanctuary, we'll be facing the woods. Today, we want the woods to our back so the picture will be pretty. Bill Rettberg is going to be our director. He's going to be up on that ten-foot ladder.

So all members and all our children, everybody in the Fellowship family, go over and stand somewhere on the line of that "U." And those of you who are visiting with us today, will you stand near the ladder so you can go where Bill tells you to. You're to be our cheering section. And when we get in place, don't start digging until Bill tells you. First, he'll want you to look up at him so he can get a good picture of it. And then he'll say, "dig in." And turn over some dirt, then please come directly back over to the table to share champagne and punch and some toast.

So, follow Glenn Brown, please. All members and children, on the "U."

BILL RETTBERG: Okay, gang, here we go. Okay, we need everybody looking up here. Make sure that you can see me, because the camera will see your faces that way. So everybody look in here. We're going to do about three, and then go ahead and dig. I'll let you know when to dig. Three this way. Everybody look in here. Look happy, gang.

ALL: We are!

BILL RETTBERG: I know that. Okay, we're going to do it again. Two more times. Okay, one more. Okay, gang, dig in!

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GLENN BROWN: I'd like to propose the first toast. This is to our future generations because it is for they that we started this project and it will be up to them to help complete it. To our younger generation!

CROWD: Here, here!

JOE WESLEY: I'd like to propose a toast to all of those, particularly leadership, but all of those who have hung in with this process for what is now, what Dirk, the fifth year? Five years, yeah. And going into five years to say with Dirk, we're going to build this baby. It's going to come up out here. But my toast is to us, all of us!

ALL: Here, here!

BETH BROWN: A toast. May the new church bring you warm and beautiful memories.

CHARLES HARRIS: A toast. I wanted to toast all those Unitarian Universalist churches and fellowships that have encouraged and have advised us as we've gone to build our own church here. So, a toast!

Martha Harris: Okay. A toast. A toast to Alice and Joe Wesley who have really been wonderful leaders.

ALICE WESLEY: A toast. A toast. We have a representative from the Barstow Bank here. And we have, of course, a lot of Governor's people. So a toast to the wonderful people who lend money and help us get permits.

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MARLENE LIEB: As co-advisor of this group for the past several years with Pam Burns for a few years and with Judy the last several years, it's been a pleasure to work with these young folks. For a congregation our size, we've always had 10 to 12 active teams. And they're going to tell you a little bit about how this grill came about this morning. Our past president, Ryan Stehlick, is vacationing at the ocean, so he couldn't be here to celebrate this, but he certainly played a big role in the building and fundraising for this grill. And Judy, my co-

advisor for YRUU, is going to introduce our current president.

JUDY STEHLICK: I just wanted to mention that this past year's YRUU group has been together at the Fellowship for about seven years. And we're sorry, can you hear me now? We're sorry to see our four graduates, Erin, Cheryl, Jorn, and Sarah go on to college, but we have four new ones coming on, Stephen, Katrina, Jennifer, and Jeff. And we also, the YRUU wants to express our gratitude to the entire Fellowship for all their generous support. And now to dedicate the barbecue is next year's president, Roxanne Saucier.

ROXANNE SAUCIER: As you probably know, the YRUU's contribution to our new church is a grill. We would like to thank Joe, Glenn, and Tom for helping us. We never could have done it without them. The teams originally planned to build a playground, to buy playground equipment for the church, but we quickly realized this was more than we could afford. Instead, we decided to build a barbecue grill. We worked hard for three mornings to construct the grill, first leveling the ground and digging the base, then making and pouring concrete, then finally making mortar and laying the bricks.

So on behalf of the YRUU members, I would like

to donate the grill to our new church. To try the grill out, the team will be making hot dogs for everyone. We hope it works! But first, I'd like to introduce Erin.

ERIN LIEB: Well, we had this idea that we wanted to build a grill, and we didn't realize how much work went into it. We thought it sounded real neat, but when we came out here with our shovels and started sweating, we were like, whew, let's take a break. But there's three people especially that were out here early, every single time, got us supplies. Would Tom, Glenn, and where's Joe? Joe, come up here?

Alright guys, to go with your hot dogs today, we got you pickles, because we would have been in a real pickle if it wasn't for you guys.

And there's one more person, Bob [Reinsel]. He supplied us with the grate that the charcoal rests on. And that was a really *great* contribution, and the balloon says you're the greatest.

We're looking for G-R-A-T-I-S-T, like an artist, or the greatest. But here's your balloon, Bob, thank you very much. Let's eat!

JOE WESLEY: I would recommend everybody look along the edge of the concrete pad to see the names of the teams who had a hand in pouring that pad. Thank you. ■