

Scott Rogers

Side 1:

[1/1] Rev. Scott came to Asheville as the result of his father's seeing an ad in the paper for a minister with his particular qualifications. He had, since the age of 15, wanted to be involved in full-time Christian work, serving people directly. He attended Lincoln Christian College and Seminary. He and his wife became house parents for a juvenile girls' home while he preached on weekends in a country church. For 4 ½ years he practiced family counseling in a Lutheran agency and with the restructuring of aid to the mentally ill, through the Reagan administration, became involved with politics. His qualifications for the Asheville job exactly fit the search committee needs although, because of a name confusion, they thought at first he was the only black applicant. (He is white). [O.T. Tomes]

[1/71] When he drove up to 201 Broadway he found a concrete block building which was "worse on the inside than the outside." The original 80 participating churches had dwindled to 47 with a budget of \$85,000 and a staff of 3. Seven churches phoned in his first week in office ending their financial support. He asked for three months to clarify purpose and services. Most were willing to take a chance. [Ann Brown, Tony Sayer and Ellen Clarke-Sayer]

[1/101] There was a split over group focus - become inter-faith or retain Christian name. Through John Christy of Charlotte a clearing-house concept was established. The Abernathy Methodist and other West Asheville churches had a joint revival and prayer meeting of 120 people. Food was given by volunteers in the basement of Trinity. This was 1968. [John Christy, J.C. Jones, Paul Limbert, Norman and Ann Anderson]

[2/143] There was a growing need of the mentally disturbed when, under Reagan and then Bush, institutions were closed. Block grants were given by the government to the states for local administration. Funds were reduced on all levels, resulting in a crisis four years later. [Ronald Reagan, George Bush, Jimmy Carter]

[1/173] It has taken 10 years to repair the damage. The civil rights movement alerted the churches to the responsibility in their own back yard. ABCCM administers to local Protestant and Catholic residents and is affiliated with other religious groups.

[1/197] Synagogues participate financially, and address specific needs.

[1/210] The Salvation Army is affiliated with the Community Way and the Community Way is the business arm of local charities.

[1/234] The ABCCM is the umbrella for Christian, Jewish, Bah'ai and Quaker communities. He wants it to be the cornerstone and serve all people in need. The ABCCM was the first to address poverty and establish a program with funds under the 1970 and 1972 model city grant. The Meals on Wheels project was started and later other groups began under the auspices of the ABCCM and spun off to become independent, i.e. North Carolina Rescue Mission, Helpmate (for battered women), Manna Food Bank, West Carolinians for Criminal Justice, Buncombe County Mental Health Associates, etc. Twenty-eight agencies share a data basis computer which assists clients, finds needed resources and eliminates duplication of services. [Stewart Humphrey, Ellen Clarke (formerly Clarke-Sayer)]

[1/349] A task force was formed in 1975 for families in crisis because a member was in jail. A link between the family, prisoner, and community prepares the prisoner for re-entry (see enclosure). The ABCCM provides a safety net - food, job, housing, to give released prisoners a fresh start.

[1/397] By working with the housing authority, a person in need is placed within 72 hours. Landlords are assured first and last month rent. This is a grant - not a loan.

[1/424] There are three half-way houses given by HUD.

[1/433] Twelve churches and 80 volunteers participate in the shelters. In 1985-88, Armstrong (renovating the Haywood Park Complex) offered 207 Coxe Ave to ABCCM. Despite local opposition, the property was renovated and now contains 90 beds. The issue was taken to the North Carolina Court of Appeals and won 4-1. Local support was solidified and ultimately, Hughes, who had led the opposition, donated his building to be used as a warehouse for 6 months (he moved to Riverside Drive.) [Robert Armstrong, Judge Lewis, Jim Hughes]

[1/551] In 1987 a free clinic was the next target area. The medical community denied the need at that time (clinics started in Greensboro, Winston-Salem and Raleigh in 1989-1991) but nurses volunteered time in the shelters. In 1990 the doctors visited and agreed to the need and August 4, 1991 a clinic was established. A "Good Samaritan" law relieves liability when volunteer service is given (1991).

Side 2:

[2/1] A health care task force consortium was formed to determine needs and fill gaps. Half of all emergency visits are not real emergencies - patients need to be treated and sent to a specialist or released. The ABCCM is unique in that services for the 4 cornerstone areas for people in poverty (Mathew 25) are coordinated.

[2/74] A family in need, on coming to Asheville, can get immediate help through the established clearing house.

[2/125] There are three levels of homeless:

1. Educated - lost resources - need basic platform and "grub stakes."
2. Chronic alcoholics and mentally ill - nursing homes reimbursed by Medicaid where medication and side effects managed (new as of Oct 1991).
3. Chronic alcoholics - non aggressive - loss of disability check - and aggressive pan handlers - often "druggies" out of resources. [Young men saying "vet, will work for food" have no desire to work - make good living of \$150 a day and are spurred on by TV]

[2/207] The Vietnam vet is supported by Oteen Hospital which works closely with the shelter.

[2/236] HUD provides 3 half-way houses. "Steadfast Home" provides a place for returning women from prison. A plan is developed and a "faithful friend" is provided.

[2/263] There is a place available for everyone in need: Salvation Army - (temporary transient lodging) Eliada Home - foster care orphanage (see enclosure) (for court appointed placement of juveniles and for families up to 90 days), Trinity Place (for runaway juveniles).

[2/395] Volunteers are the heart and life blood of ABCCM - the 1,500 active volunteers are trained and supervised by a staff of 14 (10 full-time and 4 part-time). There are now 156 member churches and the budget is \$655,000 a year. \$1.8 million dollars is distributed in clothes, Bibles and medicines.

[2/366] Special events which raise funds and focus on community needs such as "sharing affair," a flea market held in 1982 and Story Telling Festival use 12,000 volunteers.

[2/408] The Junior League supplies personal hygiene packages for shelters and works with the Kiwanas Club in cooking teams.

[2/432] Drugs are the scourge of our families and get in the way of effective planning. The Housing Authority guidelines mandated the eviction of a family during the 4th night of the blizzard and ABCCM found housing. Tobacco will have to be curtailed by the state and the Agricultural Extension Center will have to help farmers change

over from tobacco farming to raising turkeys. A large number of non-profit organizations are funded by the tobacco companies [which will make obtaining legislation against their interests difficult].

[2/515] Patients with AIDS reside in a house run by the Western North Carolina AIDS Project. This has been taken over by the Hospitality House, funded locally. This was started by a former volunteer and is not religiously based.

[2/569] Regarding his family and hopes for the future. His wife, Shirley, is the director of volunteers for social services. They have three children. He wants to see churches continue to take leadership in restoring basic fiber and values. The ABCCM acts as a clearing house and a link between all faiths and acts as true brothers and sisters of humanity. [Shirley, Audrey, Adam, Nathan Rogers]