

Unitarian Universalist Church of Asheville
Oral Histories Collection

Elizabeth and Dick DuMez Oral History

Interviewed by Ruth Beard

November 1, 2000

SIDE 1:

Ruth: This is Ruth Beard interviewing Liz DuMez at her Deerfield home for the historical files of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Asheville. The date is November 1, 2000. Okay Liz, let's go ahead and give me some information about yourself and when you moved here, and what you did before, and so forth.

Liz: All right, we moved to Asheville in 1983 from Schenectady, New York. Dick was getting tired of too much snow up there in the north, and we had read that Asheville was a wonderful place to retire, and we investigated before we came down to be sure there was a Unitarian church here.

Ruth: What did you do in your life?

Liz: Well, after I finished Vassar, I graduated in 1939 with an AB in psychology, I went to New York City and worked in, well, we called it personnel, I realize that it's Human Resources now. I worked for a greeting card company, and then it was prior to the war, and I was distressed that greeting cards was not adding to the war effort very much, so I worked with the American Chicken Company which was involved at that time in packing ration cases in the army. Then I went into the Navy, I served as an officer in the Navy from 1943 to 1946. I also was called to active duty in 1948, but between those two times I was doing social work. I was an intake worker for a children's service. Then I was married in 1949. We had two boys, and when they seemed old enough to me I went into teaching. I taught sixth grade English from about 1962 until I retired in 1980.

Ruth: That's a good long teaching career.

Liz: Yes, and I enjoyed it very much. It was very challenging. Teaching is, I think, the hardest job you can possibly do. But I did enjoy it.

Ruth: And that's helped you with your present Guardian ad Litum?

Liz: Yes, indeed it has. I also do volunteer work now. I work in our local elementary school, two mornings a week I work with kindergarteners which is lots of fun.

Ruth: What do you do?

Liz: Well, whatever needs to be done. Right now they have a number of Spanish-speaking children, and I am working with one who has absolutely no English. The father speaks English

but the mother does not. And it is very difficult for this little boy to get along. He is also very immature. So I work a lot with him, trying to help him.

Ruth: Do you speak Spanish?

Liz: No, we speak to each other, and (laughs) I have no idea what he says and of course he has little idea of what I say. It's very interesting!

Ruth: So it's facial... What denomination did you belong to before UUs and why did you join Unitarianism?

Liz: I was brought up as an Episcopalian. Our family was very involved in the church, and we always went to church, from toddlers right up to high school. We went to both Sunday school and to church services on Sundays. My father was quite involved in the vestry of the church and he was also the chancellor of the diocese. He was an attorney, so he was an attorney for the diocese in Harrisburg. When we got married, Dick really could not stomach the Episcopal liturgy. So that didn't work very well, and I really did want us to belong to the same church. So, I joined his church, the Congregational church. We were members there, that was in Denver, Colorado. Then when we moved east, when we moved to New York, the section we were in had no Congregational church. So, we joined the Presbyterian church. After a while, a number of years, we became disenchanted, mainly because the church seemed so involved in the business matters in the church, rather than in spiritual growth and so on. So we moved around, and quite by chance ran into a Unitarian church. We had never heard of it, and the building didn't look like a church, you know how some of them don't. But we were invited in, and shown around the building, this was not on a Sunday, and invited to come to a service, and indeed we were enchanted. That was it. We went there, and, I think it was about 1975. And so we have been Unitarians ever since. We wouldn't think of being anything else.

Ruth: That really isn't as long as thought...as one would think, talking with you.

Liz: Well, twenty-five years though, from 1975 until now, is that what you mean?

Ruth: You come across as being a long, long time, born and bred UUs.

Liz: No, no...

Ruth: So you joined here as soon as you came?

Liz: Yes. When we came down to look at Asheville and so on, on one of our trips we stopped at the church and had an appointment with Bill Hammond who was the minister at the time, and we said yes, this is for us. He encouraged us to join, so we did.

Ruth: Did you study the Unitarian philosophy and doctrine first, or were you just tired of the Presbyterians?

Liz: When we left the Presbyterian church and went to the Unitarian church, I was intrigued in particular by the social action, because I felt that no matter your belief, if you didn't put them in action it was no good. That was the first reason. And then, we did not at that time have any

particular courses to teach us about it. There were books, we did read books, and I don't think we had the seven principles at that time, but similar, which intrigued me, and that's why we joined, that's why I joined.

Ruth: Okay, would you like to tell us a little bit about the history of this church, and your experiences here, where you've volunteered, and your involvement.

Liz: When we came I would say there were, I really don't know, 300-350 members perhaps. Bill Hammond was finishing his ministry, he was about to retire, and as you know he was followed by Jim Brewer, and then we had an interim minister, Bill Hauff. And I am crazy about Bill Hauff, I think he is one of my favorite ministers of all time. And of course now we have Maureen [Killoran]. So those were the ministers during my time at church. When we joined we had no choir, we did have an organist. I don't remember his name, do you?

Ruth: No, I don't. It was a male.

Liz: He was a male, he was married, and his wife, they were members, and he was a trained organist.

Ruth: Was he a member?

Liz: I thought he was, I don't know. I thought they were both members. But at any rate, he was a trained organist, and we had organ music, we had no piano. But we had no choir either. We just sang.

Ruth: You joined the Asheville church in 1983.

Liz: It was 1983.

Ruth: A little before I came. So I wasn't sure we had the same organist.

Liz: I don't remember his name. The offices of the church, or at least the minister's study at that time, the back section of the church, where the sound equipment is, that whole section was the minister's study or the offices. They were moved to the front when the church was enlarged by that much.

Ruth: Was Sandburg Hall there?

Liz: Oh yes, Sandburg Hall was there. The secretary was Sara Shay. She was the only one, that was it, that was the office staff. Sara was never available on Sunday. One could not ask her anything about church on Sunday, and no one was in the office, the office was not open, contrary to the present situation. There were no adult ed classes that I recall. And I believe when we came Janet Harvey was there as the director of Religious Education, and working either then or later for her MRE [masters in religious education]. And that's about all I recall, quite a bit different from what we have today. Speaking of Janet, we used to have, and you will remember this, Ruth, a great Easter celebration, where we had balloons decorating the whole church, and then after the church we went outside and had a little todo and finally released these wonderful

balloons. We stopped this, I think mainly for ecological reasons, because the birds could strangle on them.

Ruth: Yes, I remember that. As busy as you have been now and in the past with the church, I'm sure that you had more volunteer work you did during those years since 1983.

Liz: Yes, when I came down, the Guernseys, Helen and Rob, had preceded us moving here by a year and we were friends up in New York. Helen wanted me to immediately get involved and get a job. Virginia Love suggested that I might sell, we used to sell little church cards, notepaper. Helen said that's not a good job for me. I'm not quite sure why, whether it was too difficult or too easy I don't know (laughs). The first job I did was the magazine exchange. It took some time getting it in the newsletter and sorting them out and so on. It wasn't what you call a difficult job, but it was a good start. I was on the Social Action committee. We changed it to Social Concerns, and now we're back again to Social Action.

Ruth: We are Social Action now.

Liz: To be sure. I was chair of the Denominational Affairs committee. We were involved mostly in sending people to GA [General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association] and so on. I chaired the Nominating, that was during Jim Brewer's time I remember because Jim wanted to be notified of whom we were considering so that if that person came to him and said they've asked me to do it, what do you think, and I never thought that was appropriate, I always thought the Nominating Committee should be quite separate from the minister or the Board, or anything else. But anyway, that's the way it was. I was a Board member, I think from 1989-1991. It was interesting to me because I served with three different ministers, a year with Jim, one with Bill Hauff, and then one with Maureen. Their styles were quite different which had a definite influence on the Board. I served three years because I completed, I think it was, Dick Bury's term and then I was elected for a regular term.

Ruth: Any particular important times during those three ministers?

Liz: Well, they were all important. I don't know as I remember anything outstanding. No, I really don't. Betty Fitz was chair for two years, when I was on it, and Mary Alm for a year when I was there. I worked on the Bylaws, I think that was 1991. And that's a challenge, to say the least. Our Bylaws are so involved. I was always under the impression that bylaws were an outline, rules and regulations, but ours are so specific so forth and so on. Actually, I think the bylaws need revising again.

Ruth: Well, they plan to do that, but I thought they may be more specific, even.

Liz: Could be. I don't know, I haven't heard, just that they need to be revised.

Ruth: Are you going to work on it, if they ask you?

Liz: Well, if they ask me, yes I would. I hope they have some younger blood who is charging ahead and eager on the bylaws. I chaired the Pastoral Visitors Committee and sort of founded it with Maureen. That was I think in 1992 through 1996, and I still think Pastoral Visitors is one of the best things about our church.

Ruth: What did you do?

Liz: Actually set up the committee, interviewed perspective people, it's much more formal now. You have to write an essay and you have to have a written application and take Maureen's course "What Do I Say After I Say Hello." But we got it started and organized and got the forms for visits and so on. That was a challenging job, I enjoyed that very much.

Ruth: You went to the person's home or to their nursing center, or when did you decide, did they approach you first?

Liz: You mean, someone who wanted to be a pastoral visitor?

Ruth: No, the people that were visited.

Liz: Well, no, people don't approach us and say we want a pastoral visitor. In fact, some people feel a definite stigma about, I hope I'm not on the list, "on the list," while others of course are delighted that they have someone who cares and checks on them once a month at least, or so. In fact, Maureen surprised me, embarrassed me, at a meeting in 1996 with the award of the Unsung UU, and it was mainly because of this, having started, organized and run the Pastoral Visitors. When I say run it, I mean, obviously Maureen runs it, but getting it organized and so on. Let me see, what else. Oh, I chaired and started the Office Volunteers. We had Sundays with office for quite a while, this was in addition to the people who covered the office on Sunday, and helped out with office chores, getting the newsletter out, doing a lot of xeroxing, duplicating, whatever needs to be done.

Ruth: During the week.

Liz: Yes.

Ruth: You're still doing it on Sunday.

Liz: Yes.

Ruth: Good, good, good! Couldn't get along without you.

Liz: I've been on the Ministerial Advisory Committee, I think that was...well, I've just gone off that, so it was the past two or three years.

Ruth: Tell us a little bit about the responsibilities for that, because not very many people are on that and we don't know much about it.

Liz: There are only three, and these are people that are appointed by the Board, with the approval, or acquiescence of the minister. It is no longer called the Ministerial Advisory Committee, it is now the Committee on the Ministry, or something like that. It is supposed to improve the quality of the ministry in our church, and in UU, the larger picture. I have never felt that it was a very successful committee, in that, if you ask anybody who is on that committee, they will say, I don't know, what does that committee do? Even though about once a month we

put notices in the newsletter. To me it is not a very effective committee, although as far as a support of the minister, it is. But it isn't supposed to be exactly a support of the minister. So I don't know.

Ruth: More an objective committee, to evaluate.

Liz: That's right, and that is done, the work of the minister is evaluated each year, and a report is made to her, and she makes a report just as she does to the congregation. But as I say, I think it is sort of out there in netherland. Do you have much feeling about it?

Ruth: No, and I was never on it, and I never knew how objective it was. In fact, I do have a contact form to use, I'm not supposed to interrupt you. I would give my input and they would tell the minister what Ruth Beard said, but they wouldn't come back and tell me what they discussed, or what the minister said. And I felt it should be very very private.

Liz: Well, I don't know. You are on for three years... Let me see, have I missed anything? I served on the Memorial Services Support Committee, which I don't think exists any more. I think our pastoral system does that with Maureen, and I think Lee Thomas works with memorial services. But we used to work with her, obviously she is chair of the committee. And when you had a memorial service there is quite a bit of work involved, you had to be sure everything was right, and so on. I've been a Care Ring leader.

Ruth: There are lots of Care Rings, and when did that start?

Liz: I have no idea. Certainly we did not have them when we came in 1983. Now, the people in a geographical area are grouped together with a leader and get together periodically, depending upon the particular Care Ring, supporting each other and also if any business comes up in the church that they want to discuss in small groups it's presented to a Care Ring. Dick and I were UUSC [Unitarian Universalist Service Committee] regional representatives, that is to the District [of the Unitarian Universalist Association]. We worked and were responsible for getting a representative in every church. We just got that by chance. Someone called us when we first came down here, "Wouldn't you like to do this job for the district?" It took a lot of time actually, and we travelled around the district and visited the churches within the district. We also had annual training which was usually in Boston. One year, when we first started, knowing no better, we went at this with vigor and got representatives in every church, for which we were awarded a lovely small pewter chalice which Maureen uses now, sometimes in church. Oh, I've talked so much. I'm a reader for services, although I haven't done that for a long time, I don't know if they still keep me on the list or not.

Ruth: I think you need to sign up every so often. It is up on the bulletin board, a current invitation.

Liz: I particularly like to take part in the Christmas services. I can't think of anything else. Actually the only thing I am doing now is pastoral visiting.

Ruth: Anything else, any major changes that you felt the need for, or in the past was wrong, changes that were detrimental?

Liz: Now, we are going through this great "Reach for the Sky" five-year plan, and I will be extremely interested in how that comes out. One reason being, in the past we seem to always have difficulty making those budgets. So I can't help wondering, can we get the enthusiasm and talk about all these wonderful things that may or could happen and then consider the money, rather than the other way around. Whether that will happen, I don't know.

Ruth: How do you feel about Deerfield? I know that's a little bit disconnected, but it is Episcopal, is it not? Do you have that atmosphere here, or is it very loose and you can come to the Unitarians without feeling pressed?

Liz: No, I don't feel discriminated against. I don't know what proportion of the community here is Episcopalian. I suspect it's quite high. We have a chapel on the campus, and a fulltime chaplain. But we are welcome to all activities, and no, there is no pressure whatsoever, or discrimination because we're UUs.

Ruth: Have you ever given a This I Believe before?

Liz: Not in our Asheville church. In our Schenectady New York church we had no summer minister so the lay leaders in the church took over the services in the summer, and the sermon so to speak was very much like a This I Believe or was an expanded version to include history and so on, and I did do that, and I enjoyed it. I think it's a very important thing to do from time to time, to look at yourself and think, hey, what do I believe and why, rather than sort of coasting along which is an easy way to do it. But I think it's important to do it. But I have not done it here. As I said, I've been asked, but I have declined that honor.

Ruth: Well, can you think of anything else?

Liz: Something I would like to see in our church is...

SIDE 2:

...increased participation and leadership in the lay ministry. I think this is coming, I think we need, however, either a volunteer, preferably paid trained person, to take over the whole thing and work on it, rather than have it...We have excellent leaders, but it is so individual...

Ruth: What do you call the lay ministry?

Liz: Well, pastoral visitors, for instance, is lay ministry. Any of those committees, if you can call them committees, in the church that work for the benefit of us all, actually.

Ruth: So this would be a head for all of these, rather than separate ones.

Liz: Absolutely. This is a small thing: I wish that in our morning services we do one of two things: Either no talking as we gather and while we have a paid professional musician is performing and people are talking, I think that is dreadful, or, just drop the playing, whichever people want. I think it is too bad to have so much talking. This last Sunday, we had such an interesting harpist, and it is just difficult to hear because we are all friends, we have this lovely community, and we say a little to each other before the service. I also would like to see in

whatever we call our every-member canvass, I would love to see it started earlier, I would like to see more selling of, you know, this is what we can do, or could do, so that by the time you are ready to make your pledge you have more of a background of it. I'd like to see more of a spirit that we can do it, rather than how we've never done it, we can't fix a budget. I think it's too bad to start out with such a negative, but that's my impression every year, and I don't know that we've ever made the budget, since I've been here. So those are sort of minor things.

Ruth: Well, they are important. Okay, well, if you haven't anything more, we will close this off, and I thank you very much Liz.

Liz: You are quite welcome.

Ruth: And we will interview your husband now.

This is Ruth Beard interviewing Dick DuMez for the history files of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Asheville. The date is November 1, 2000, and we are here at his Deerfield apartment. And Dick I would like you to just go ahead and tell us about your background before you became a UU and so forth.

Dick: As my wife Elizabeth said, I moved here to Asheville from away. I grew up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, actually a suburb of Milwaukee, and was a member of the First Congregational Church of Wauwatosa which as far as religion is concerned formed an interesting development in my history. My family knew the minister, the Reverend Henry James B. Veriwell, they were friends. I was a member of the youth organization, for one reason. This is to my mind an interesting introduction, because my younger sister and I had to go to Sunday school each Sunday, but Mother and Dad did not, because Mother said on Sunday we had our noon meal at noon, our big meal, and therefore she had to spend the morning preparing the dinner. So we went off to church, and I couldn't figure this out, until one day the head of the church school said to my father, your son is creating quite a bit of problems and I think you had better come in and join the staff and teach that group. And that moved our family from a noon dinner to an evening dinner. That straightened out his son. I had an interesting outlook on religious life, in that I was a member of the youth group which was purely social. Reverend Henry James B. never was successful in getting us to do anything other than have a social life and I became among other things in the church as I grew up and grew older, an usher in the church. Because my good friend Phil Swan was an usher, and his older brother was in charge of the ushers. And I hate to admit it, but this was a time when I was old enough to smoke. And after each church service started, and we got everybody seated, and the minister was about ready to go into his sermon, we went out on the front steps and smoked and chatted. So my attitude towards what it's like to be wrapped up in church life was purely social and had very little...

Ruth: And this was all before you became a Unitarian.

Dick: So I was ostensibly a member of the Congregational church, and when we got married, Elizabeth was a member of the Episcopal church, and we came to the conclusion it would be easier for her to become a Congregationalist than for me to become an Episcopalian. Because, among other things, her minister in Lancashire said to her one day, if you are going to marry this fellow, you better suggest to him that he learn something about the Episcopal church. So she wrote a letter to me saying, I was living in Denver at the time, that father so-and-so thinks you

had better learn something about the Episcopal church. So the first thing I did was, one Sunday I went to the Cathedral Church of St. John's in the Wilderness in Denver and I didn't know what was going on, so I went to the side entrance, and that was a little chapel where two or three ministers and an acolyte were holding forth, and it didn't seem to me that there was anybody but me sitting in the congregation. So I said something to somebody who knew something about the Episcopal church, and he said yes, that could happen anywhere. And that was my first introduction to the more formal church life. I still knew that I had to learn more about the Episcopal church, and as it happened, the, I've forgotten the title, the Dean, the Dean of the Cathedral was a good friend of the minister of the Congregational church. In fact, they were such good friends that the Dean had a young couple that wanted to get married, and under the rules of the Episcopal church he couldn't, he would call the minister of the Congregational church, and he would say, "Hand them over to me, we'll take care of them." And that was my introduction to the Dean. So I called him up on the telephone one day, and said I'm supposed to learn something about the Episcopal church, and I would like to chat with you. And he said, "Where do you work?" I said "I work at the Colorado . ." "Oh," he said, "That's where the officiating committee in the local church of St. John's in the Wilderness, that's where we meet." In the board room of a bank. So we will get together on Monday morning and we will go over there. So I met him at the appointed hour, and he said, Now, my classes... and I said, now wait a minute, I don't want to join the church, I just want to learn about it. And I explained to him why. He said, you give me the name of that minister back in Rochester, I'll write him a letter saying that if you two want to get married here in Denver, I would marry you. And that's what we did. It took care of it. That was my introduction to the real sacredness of my membership in the church.

Ruth: So when did you become a Unitarian, then.

Dick: Alright, let me get into that, then. We moved, eventually, to Schenectady, actually to the suburb called where I was working with the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and looked for Congregational churches. Well, we couldn't find it. And in making some inquiries, someone said well, years and years ago the Congregationalists and the Presbyterians made an agreement. The Presbyterians would not go into New England if the Congregationalists would stay out of New York. Which they did. That's why there were no Congregationalist churches. So that plus the fact that the provost at RPI and the dean of the engineering school and a few other people were very good friends of the minister of the Presbyterian church, and in fact they were called the three Bs. And it soon appeared to me that it would be a good strategy to get along with the provost when I worked there if I would join the Presbyterian church, which I did. We had a lot of friends at the Presbyterian church, I became a member of the Board of Trustees and so forth, and I began to see in the history some of the ideas they had. We came to a trustees meeting one night, and they were discussing things, and I said it seems to me we are not talking about the Christian attitude towards this. And somebody said, now wait a minute, we have to be practical. And I said...practical...Christian...So I had a session with the local, I forget what the Presbyterian church calls it, the two or three county area, and he said I had a good thought. He said, you know, there's a church you might be interested in here in Schenectady, it's called the Unitarian church. You might try it. I had never heard of the Unitarian church. But I took his word for it, and we tried it, and we liked it. We found it very, very interesting. And that's how we joined the Unitarian church. We had no earlier knowledge of this church at all. That was it. We had a very interesting introduction to the Unitarian church there. We were made members, and we came in to sign the book, and somebody said, Rudy, come here, and this quiet little fellow who seemed to be so shy and everything, he had a long beard and he came in holding forth, and this was my

introduction, impressive introduction to the Unitarian officials. Anyway, we joined the Unitarian church. It was a very interesting church, it had been designed by a fellow named Stone, a very famous architect. He had designed the American embassy in India, and he designed buildings of the State University of New York, in Albany. They were all built of stone, they were all flat, and they all had roofs that leaked. And that was true of the Unitarian church in Schenectady. Not only was it flat, but it actually came to a slight V in the middle which was a little lower so it collected all the oak leaves which were flying around in the area, and we periodically had to clear them.

Ruth: Go ahead.

Dick: I probably should confine this to Asheville.

Ruth: To Asheville.

Dick: We decided to move from upstate New York because of the winters to Asheville, and we looked around to the sunbelt. We had to look to the sunbelt. And the sunbelt ended up as Asheville. We moved to the city of Asheville and we lived on the southside. And we naturally gravitated to the Unitarian church, among other things. I think the Guernseys had moved there the year before, and they were in the Unitarian church before we went there. One of the first things that happened, a fellow came up to us, one of the officers of the church, and said, have you joined? We said no, we just started coming. He said, let's not have all of that nonsense, Joe, bring the book here! And a fellow came over with the book, and he said, here, just sign that, and you're a member of the church. That was how we joined the Unitarian Church of Asheville.

Ruth: That was about 1983?

Dick: We joined in 1983, and I remember the ministers up to that time had all come for the last five years of their ministry to retire. That's how our church at that time used to get their ministers. They all were getting ready to retire, and this seemed like a good place to do that, to finish their last ministry. What was the name of the minister...

Ruth: Bill Hammond.

Dick: Bill Hammond. Bill Hammond was the minister. There are two things I remember about Bill Hammond. One is, he had a debate with a fellow, one of these fire-eating Christians, on some phase of...oh, God was being kicked out of schools. That was the point. And so, he wanted some friends to go with him, so he could have some support. So Elizabeth and I went, and that was my personal introduction to the minister. Because there was no one else but us there. Nobody else took this thing seriously, but anyway we had this debate. The other thing I can remember about Bill Hammond was he loved jazz. One day, it couldn't have been on a Sunday, but anyway it was some type of social gathering at church, and he had a contest. He had a record, a dance band, and he had a contest: Could you identify this band? This is an interesting minister. The biggest complaint about him was he was too intellectual. I thought, if he enjoys this contest, he is not too intellectual. Anyway, that was my impression. In the course of my association with the church I became chairman of the Denominational Affairs Committee. I remember going to the Finance Committee meeting one time to get some support for Denominational Affairs Committee. They said no, no we don't have that type of money. We know how much people will give, and they

won't give to that. They had an attitude that stood in the way of a real successful financial drive. One day, this was not too long after we had come to church, we got a telephone call, a long distance call from a woman out in Indiana who said she was a member of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, and they were looking for somebody to take over a job for them. This was a four-state organization of individual Unitarian church Service Committee representatives. Each church should have a representative on the Service Committee. This was for four states. Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. Would we do it. We said, wait a minute, let's talk about it. I'll tell you what we'll do. So-and-so will be over at a meeting in Wilmington for the weekend, and she can give you a real rundown on this. So we spent the weekend in Wilmington and we learned all about the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, and we agreed to be the persons who would drum up this trade. And we were successful. We got a representative in every church in the four-state area that we were responsible for. And this led to our being awarded a silver chalice. And I think it is somewhere in the church archives. I became a member of the Board of Trustees of the Service Committee, and we could go to their meetings in Boston.

Ruth: What about other local positions you have been in our church?

Dick: Well, that was my main, at the time, and that sort of petered out.

Ruth: How about the Long Range Planning Committee that we used to have. Weren't you on that?

Dick: There were several Long Range. Jim Brewer was minister by this time, and there had been one committee, I was not a member of it, but it had been in existence for three years, and they finally gave a report, and among other things it recommended that we have a permanent minister of religious education. And Jim Brewer said, no, we needed an assistant minister to me. And the whole thing was sort of thrown into the ashes when the people next door sold their house to the church. And that took all of the available funds, and you know the history of paying for that thing. It made a great big change in how we were thinking at the time. I did become the first chair of the Ministerial Advisory Committee. There were three of us. Oh, this is interesting to me. One of the first people we met in Asheville who had connections with the local Unitarian church, we were at an outdoor event in downtown Asheville, and we were talking to a fellow who turned out to be Jack Bush. And we were chatting away about the church, and he said "I was the first president of the Unitarian church." And in all the to do about the history of the church, I would periodically say Jack Bush was the first president, and people would say, well yes, so what, and I never could figure out why people didn't say now there's something worth knowing, that we today have the first president of our society. I felt he never got the recognition he should have gotten.

Ruth: Were you ever on the Board?

Dick: No. I was never on the Board. They never mentioned me in the campaign for the Board. They did Elizabeth, she was much more amenable to it. I think one of the most respected ministers, for me, that we've had was the Interim Minister, Bill Hauff. There was to my mind a real effective minister. He knew people, he knew how to work with them, he knew how to avoid contention, and yet he did a wonderful job. I think he's the best man we ever had. We had him for only a year. He had an interesting history. Each place where he was an interim minister, they

begged him to stay when his year was up. And he could not do that, under the rules of the Unitarian church. I was very disappointed that eventually the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee interest here in our church sort of drifted away. We used to do the Thanksgiving fellowship, and that was about it. My impression of the congregation here, is that it was very inside-interested, in our individual congregation. Getting beyond that was not part of our interest. I don't know if that was due to the ministers that we had, or what. But anyway, that's my impression.

Ruth: Well, we are almost to the end of the tape, but if there is anything else we will find another tape.

Dick: No, I am interested that suddenly this year a group of people, about five or six of them, have started to revive interest in the Service Committee, and we will see if it goes anywhere. They are going to do the usual Thanksgiving boxes, and maybe they will take over the Service Committee. Because I think the Service Committee is the one thing that the Unitarian church has to offer to the interests of how we run our individual social agenda.

Ruth: Well Dick, I thank you very much, this has been very interesting, the whole background of prior Asheville UUism, and why you joined, etc. And so I thank you and this closes our interview.

Dick: So what are we going to do with this?

Ruth: It goes in the files, and put on the computer...

Dick: Are we going to make a book...

Ruth: I doubt we will do that. But it will be available for people to read.

Dick: Good!

Ruth: Thank you very much.