

A Global Church – Contextual Introduction by Oliveann Slotta

This unsolicited, three paragraph description of one urban congregation, Evanston United Methodist Church, highlights its culture as “global” and ends with a reference to the Ecumenical Institute (EI) and its current name, ICA. The concluding sentence recognizes a connection between the global culture of the Evanston congregation and the global consciousness and focus of the Institute, which was graphically represented by its primary symbol, the global grid and its 54 identified areas and six sub-regions each.

This current statement was written in 2019, and acknowledges an impactful congregational reform program called the Local Church Experiment* (LCX) which was operative in EI from 1969 – 1973. The Evanston clergy couple referenced was Rev. George and Ruthe Yost, whose tenure there was 1960 – 1974; Rev. Yost retired from the ministry from Evanston and joined the staff of the Ecumenical Institute, known as the Order Ecumenical, eventually accepting assignments to several international locations including Malaysia and Vienna.

*In this LCX program, four ecumenical congregations, the clergy couple from each, and their “auxiliary” of about 6 – 10 dedicated lay persons, met weekly and every other weekend, led by the local EI House “prior,” to support congregational reform (from a focus on individual well being to a focus on innocent human suffering around the globe.)

At this same 125th Anniversary occasion, the pastor who followed the Yosts, Ken Neal, delivered a sermon reflecting on his various local church assignments and the journey of each of those congregations. His closing line was, “of all of these congregations, Evanston was the only one to experience a resurrection.” This because it continues to serve the community as a “Center for Health and Healing.”

Note: The following newsletter is presented with pages in reverse order since, “A Global Church – Memories of Evanston by Les Law” was on the last page.

A Global Church

MEMORIES OF EVANSTON by Les Law

Hope and I attended an EUB (Evangelical United Brethren) Church in the Denver area, attended Westmar EUB College in Iowa, got married in an EUB Church, and went to Sierra Leone to work at Harford EUB School for Girls in Sierra Leone. The school was founded in 1900. We left the U.S. as EUB's in 1965 and returned in 1968 as United Methodists. Our home church was closed so we had to search for another home. We found Evanston and have never regretted it. When leaving Sierra Leone, we wanted to maintain a connection, so we picked one of our students to come the U.S. to go to college. We chose Dorcas, who attended Westmar for one year in order to easily adapt to a new culture. What we did not expect was the Sunday School Class, Friendly Fidelis, at Evanston decided to assist Dorcas by paying a large portion of her college costs. Dorcas graduated in 1974 from University of Northern Colorado with a degree in Nursing. She was married at Evanston and returned to Sierra Leone where her two children were born. Evanston created a "sister church" relationship with the church Dorcas and her husband attended at Njala University in Sierra Leone. Evanston helped their "sister" with donations of Bibles, hymnals, and money. The relationship was solidified with a team of Evanston members going to Sierra Leone in 1978.

Just a few years later, Evanston developed a relationship with Kenya due to having a Student Pastor, and Iliff student, Haroun Gatobu from Kenya, come to Evanston. A few years after he came to Evanston, his fiancée, Anne, came to the U.S. and attended Evanston. Haroun and Anne were married at Evanston and Evanston was pleased to later have some of their children come to Sunday School. Evanston member Nancy Berry became close to the Gatobu's and developed a relationship between the Rocky Mountain UMC Conference and the Gatobu's area in Kenya. Both Haroun and Anne are ordained Pastors in The United Methodist Church. Nancy Berry, the Gatobu's, and Evanston, are family. In the 80's, 90's and 2000's, Evanston further celebrated their connection with Africa and the world by sponsoring refugee families from Sudan (now Southern Sudan), Ethiopia, and Afghanistan. Working with a local refugee organization, Evanston helped with furniture, jobs, cultural adaptation, bus and transportation schedules, school enrollments, and emotional and spiritual support. Two of the families came from a Muslim religious background with one family having a Christian background.

Locally Evanston worked with a homeless mother and recovering addict, with 3 children, to find a place to live and find a job. Evanston also provided furniture for the house and some legal support that was needed. Evanston supported Warren Village with two members serving on their Board of Directors, supported food banks, including early support for Metro Caring. Through one of Evanston's long-term Pastors, they were associated with the Ecumenical Institute (now known as ICA, Institute of Cultural Affairs) and its program of community social development in the U.S. and world-wide.

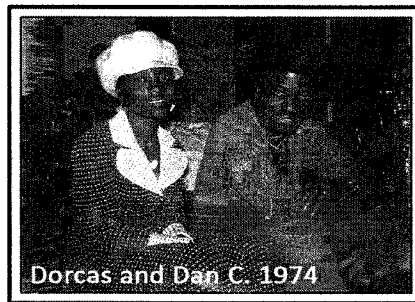
December 29 1974.

Dear Christian Friends,

Thank you very kindly for all your gracious help and wonderful gifts at our wedding. We have opened up all the gifts, and believe us it took us most of the afternoon of the 22nd, to do that.

Rev. Neal's sermon that Sunday morning remains fresh in our minds. Truly the world has a lot of means but little or no meaning. Through your love and help you have given us a lot of means, and we hope that by the grace of God we will find some meaning for it all. We will long remember our wedding day. We will long remember the fine men and women at Evanston United Methodist. Again we thank you all very kindly.

Sincerely,
Dorcas & Dan
Dorcas & Dan.



Dorcas and Dan C. 1974



Ali, Dorcas, Hopenet, Dan Kamanda
(Sierra Leone)
Spring 1992

The 2013 Merger with University Park UMC and the Opening of the Evanston Center for Spiritual Wholeness and Healing



Please Join Us at the Open House of

THE EVANSTON CENTER FOR SPIRITUAL WHOLENESS & HEALING

2122 S. LAFAYETTE STREET, DENVER, CO 80210

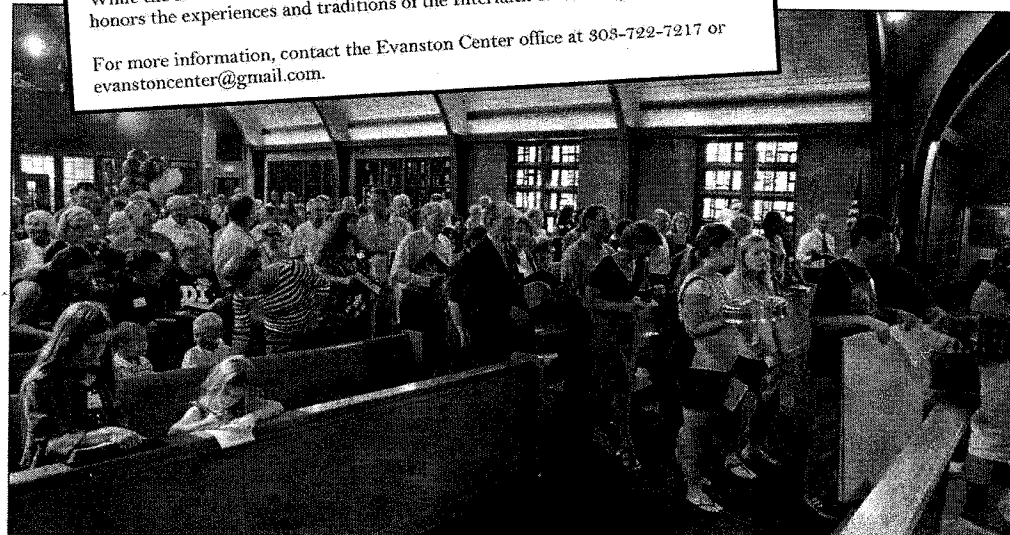
Thursday, September 26, 5-7 p.m.

Tours, Labyrinth & Chair Yoga 5:00 to 5:45 p.m.
Ribbon Cutting with Community Leaders & Officials at 6:00 p.m.
Tours, Labyrinth & Floor Yoga 6:15 to 7:00 p.m.

You are invited to the open house and celebration of the new Evanston Center for Spiritual Wholeness and Healing. We will have tours of the facility, information about multiple programs and the neighborhood outreach initiatives, an indoor labyrinth, free yoga classes, and refreshments. The Center is easily accessible for those with physical special needs (everything is on the ground floor).

The Evanston Center for Spiritual Wholeness and Healing is a unique ministry of University Park United Methodist Church. The Center is a way for people to gather in sacred community to journey toward spiritual wholeness and healing. While the Evanston Center is grounded in a progressive Christian tradition, it honors the experiences and traditions of the Interfaith community.

For more information, contact the Evanston Center office at 303-722-7217 or evanstoncenter@gmail.com.



**Program created by Brittany Collins,
Church Archivist**

Thanks to Hope Law for her very useful Evanston scrapbook, Les Law and Larry Roggensack for sharing their memories, Richard Nelson for his valuable knowledge of Evanston's history, and University Park/Evanston UMC Church Archive.

Do you have photographs or other items related to our church history you would like to donate? Would you like to be interviewed? Email brittany.collins621@gmail.com

**Labor Day
Buffalo Creek Campout**

Softball League

Bowling League

Vacation Bible School



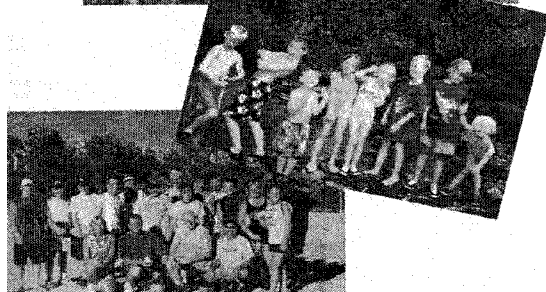
Larry Roggensack

Lifelong member of Evanston

Evanston is the church I was baptized in as a baby, confirmed in as a youth, and was and has been a part of my entire life, including now, since Evanston merged with University Park UMC in 2013. My memories of the physical building (before 1970) was an old impressive building with a tall steeple with many, many stairs! Stairs to enter the church, stairs to go down to the fellowship hall (Butler Hall), stairs to go up to the sanctuary level, and stairs to go up to the balcony of the sanctuary, where many other Sunday school rooms were located. In 1968, Evanston EUB became Evanston UMC with the merger of the Methodist Church, and two years later, the huge decision to completely raze the old building was made to be replaced by the building that now exists (although in 1988 a second construction was completed to more fully utilize the church). During the 1970 construction, worship was held at the Seventh Day Adventist Church near Porter Hospital.

Earliest memories of Evanston as a church for me include going to Sunday School, and vacation bible school, as I know Evanston took great pride in their Christian education program,--and usually attending the second of the two worship services. Later, the youth group was a very important part of my time at Evanston as lifelong relationships and friends were made, not to mention weekend retreats and backpack trips (and especially one week-long adventurous trip!) In addition, some traditions continue to this day, such as the Labor Day Buffalo Creek campout (which started in the 1960's), and the softball (1977) and bowling (1990) leagues. Evanston always seemed to be the congregation's church, as many of the programs were developed and run through the service of its congregants. The Evanston church family to me was certainly a second family. And much pride was taken in that the church family was a diverse family from many parts of the world (it was said Evanston had attendees and members from all seven of the continents-including Antarctica!).

With the merger of University Park and Evanston in 2013, it is personally gratifying that the building at Evans and Lafayette continues to be of service to that community and neighborhood in many different ways, and my hope is for that to continue as a part of the ministry of University Park United Methodist Church!

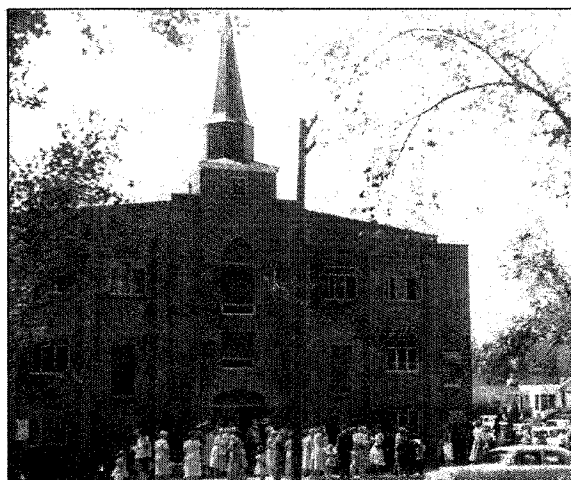
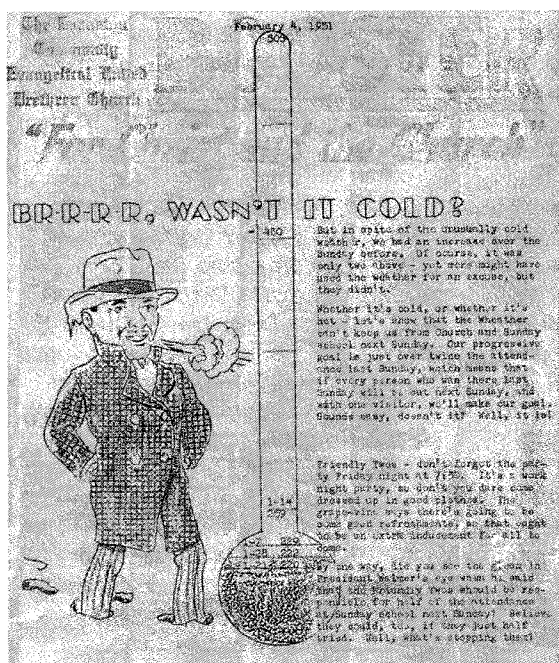




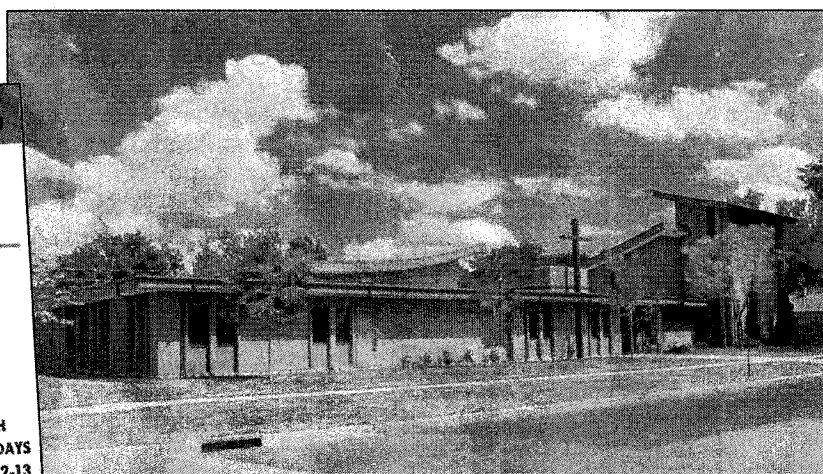
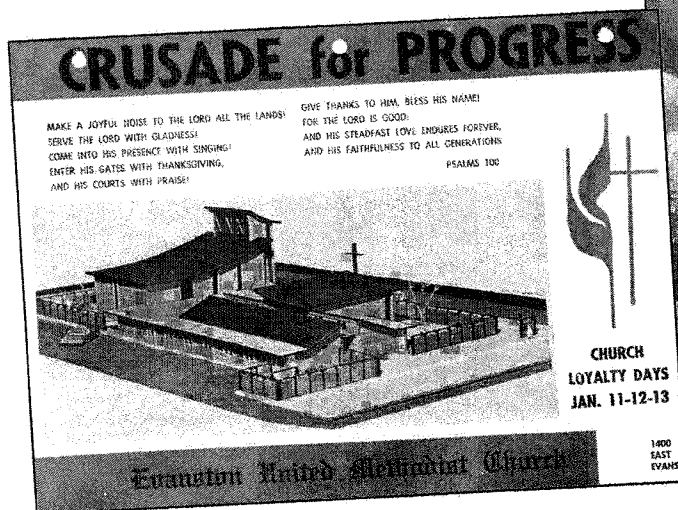
Groundbreaking of Evanston Church, 1923
 Mrs. E.M. Spreng and Miss Ella Horn



Original Church Building - Built in 1924



In 1949, an addition was added to the front of the original church building. It was dedicated in 1950 and a booster campaign was held the following year to reduce the deficit.



"The structure built in 1924 that had been added to in 1950 was torn down and a new building constructed. The first service and activities in the new church were held in December 1970. During the construction of the new building the congregation worshipped in the Seventh Day Adventist Church on south Downing and East Yale." Evanston United Methodist Church - History 1923-2002