DES MOINES PASTORAL COUNSELING CENTER

THIS IS YOUR LIFE.

CONCEPTION:

On October 22, 1970, the Task Group On Counseling Center, established by First United Methodist Church, met for the first time, with Ron Leonard as its chairman. Other members were Jack Law, Ken Henss, Ken Langer, Ron Linn, Betty Linn, Ralph Schlenker, Roger Thompson, Ray Martin, June Law, Barbara Gay and Paul Thompson. Discussion centered around a Tentative Proposal For A Counseling Center As A Ministry of First United Methodist Church, which was prepared and submitted by Dr. Ray Martin. It contained suggestions for space, staff, program and finances. After several ensuing meetings of the Task Group, the following recommendation was made: "The Task Group proposes that First United Methodist Church endorse the idea of a counseling center. While it is preferred that the center be operated as an integral part of the Church's program, an alternative would be to operate it as an independent agency with financial support from the Church.

BIRTH:

April 6, 1972, you, Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center, were born as a brand new non-profit corporation, and immediately were wrapped in a set of protective Articles of Incorporation and guiding By-Laws. You were placed in the custody of the following Board of Directors: George Hampel, Ken Henss, Jack Law, Betty Linn, Ron Linn, Ron Leonard, Bob Holliday, James Sheldon, Roger Thompson, Ralph Schlenker, Herrold Mann, Carolyn Hinchliff and James Bowman. On June 1, 1972, you were placed in the care of a new Executive Director, Dr. Ray Martin, under whose direction you were expected to grow into a full fledged counseling center, unto whom all hurting persons could come to obtain the care, understanding, acceptance and therapy necessary for emotional wellness, regardless of their ability to pay for your services.

GROWTH:

On July 5, 1972 you moved from your birthing process into your first home at 317 E. Fifth St. in Des Moines. You employed Barbara Kanzok as your Secretary-Receptionist, and opened your door to all who might seek counseling.

In October, 1972, you employed Fr. Kermit Marsh and Rev. William Weber as associate counselors. Your Board of Directors appointed Neil Hansen, Sally Ward, and Bill Corwin to fill vacancies thereon.

At your first Annual Meeting in January, 1972, it was reported that, during your first six months of operation, you served 158 persons in 409 scheduled counseling sessions. You were off to an admirable start with tremendous potential for the future. Several new members were elected to serve on your board. The new board for the year consisted of James Bowman, Bill Corwin, Fred Ferree, Jim Hammer, Ken Henss, Carolyn Hinchliff, Bob Holliday, Betty Linn, Sally Paul, Herman Kirkpatrick, Roger Thompson, Sally Ward and Neil Hanson. The presidents letter of welcome to the new members stated the following: "The Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center is quite young. Therefor much is yet to be done to make it an effective servant to our community. My hope is that the new Board of Directors will function as a harmonious body of concerned people who are committed to developing a refuge for those seeking help from qualified counselors who are open to God's guidance."

A year has passed. The date is January 9, 1974. Your supporting members are holding their second Annual Meeting. Dr. Martin reported that, during your first eighteen months of operation, 1,526 counseling sessions were conducted for a total of 437 clients. President Ken Henss reported that 1973 had been an exciting and progressive year. You stumbled a few times, but you saw your errors as learning experiences and moved forward, always keeping your efforts focused on your visionary goals. The following people were elected as new members of your board: Catherine Mick, Donald Prine, Kay Baughman, Merlin Correll, Joe Dickerson, Wilson Forker, Archie Rhoden, Jim Agnew, Glenna Evans, Brude Morgan, Peg McDougall and William Plymat. Carolyn Hinchliff was elected to be the new president of the board. Under her direction, you continued to show steady progress during 1974.

The date is January 8, 1975. You are now two and one-half years old and making good impression in your community. Your contributing members are conducting their third Annual Meeting. Dr. Joe Dickerson is elected to be the president of your board. During the previous year, you had grown to the point of needing a full time associate counselor. After a thorough process of taking applications and interviewing candidates, Dr. Jim Simmons was hired to fill the position. His employment was short-lived, however, because he submitted his resignation a few weeks after starting. Another big step you took during 1975 was to move from your original location at 317 E. Fifth St. to a new home in the Liberty Building.

On November 24, 1975, a damaging jolt shocked your system. The resignation of Dr. Ray Martin, your conceivor and first Executive Director, was accepted by the Board of Directors. That would have been a fatal blow to other centers such as yourself. However, you bravely withstood the pain and did not falter. In fact, just the opposite happened. Your wound healed quickly and from your pain came growth and strength. You went forward with renewed effort to become a counseling center with an unquestionable reputation of being a refuge where those in distress could come to find help and hope.