



# The Gateway

## Second Time's The Charm For Voice, In More Ways Than One

It's been a whirlwind year and a half for Judson. In fact, whirlwind may be putting it mildly; it's been more like a full-blown tornado. Of course, his tornado is nothing like the "tornado roaring its way through the lives of others" that is so familiar to those in recovery. Quite the opposite.

And, whether by coincidence or preordination, it all began last spring when he was asked to be the Voice of the 2011 Fellowship Hall Conference on Alcoholism and Addiction. A few months later, in May, he received his master's degree in business from a local University. Then, he decided to sate his wanderlust by embarking on a two-month trip through Europe, exploring France, Germany, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Italy and, finally, Spain. It was on that last leg of the sojourn that he met the love of his life. He even remembers the date, July 6.

"The first time I saw her was in the middle of a plaza in Barcelona," he recalled as if it were yesterday. "I saw her smile and said, 'Wow, she's got it'. She had me literally from the first minute."

The pair were inseparable for the rest of his stay in Spain and before he left they made plans for her to come visit him in the U.S. in September. She moved here in late-December, and on June 4, in a beautiful seaside ceremony on Bald Head Island, Fabiola officially became part of his family.

Meanwhile, a friend had started a business, a Brunswick pool table dealership in Greensboro, and when Judson returned from Europe, he asked him to become a partner. "Yeah, a lot's changed in my life lately," he deadpanned, flashing his trademark grin. But then, growing serious, he added, "But you know none of this would be possible with-

out the big change — my getting sober."

Indeed, the 31-year-old's descent into alcoholism was not of a gradual nature but more like falling off a cliff. While in college in the mountains of North Carolina, he would drink a beer before an 8 a.m. class, and when he turned 21, he would sometimes be the ABC store's first customer at 9 a.m.

"I literally could not do anything without drinking," he sighed. "It was all day every day since college. I was blacking out, not at the end of the night but during the day."



Somehow the Alamance County native managed to graduate. He then started a home construction business and got married, both of which were epic failures.

"Somewhere along the way, I just quit working," he said, "and it's hard to keep a business going when you don't work, much less a marriage."

By the summer of 2006, things had begun to unravel to the point that, with some cajoling, he checked himself into Fellowship Hall.

"I got out and planned to drink that weekend and quit Monday," he admitted, "and we know where that leads. Every day I'd wake up and tell myself I wasn't going to drink that day, but wound up at the liquor store by 9 a.m. The problem was, even though I was still drinking, I couldn't unlearn the knowledge I'd gained in rehab. I knew I was powerless."

It all came to a head in late November, 2006, when he got his third DUI. He essentially begged his way back into Fellowship Hall. The date was December 18, 2006.

"By then, I was 100 percent willing," he said. "I did every-

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## Conference Around the Corner For The First Weekend Of August

By virtue of the fact that this year marks Fellowship Hall's 40th anniversary, its annual conference would naturally take on added significance. But the 2011 Conference on Alcoholism and Addiction will have a couple of added attractions that will make it even more memorable.

"Every conference is a good one," said this year's Voice of the Conference, Judson, "but we've done everything we can to make this one extra special."

On the surface, nothing will appear much different from the recent past. The three-day get-together will again take place at the Marriott-Downtown in Greensboro, N.C., with most of the activity centering on the second-floor Southern Crescent Ballroom. The first-week-of-August dates are the same — this year 5, 6 and 7 — since being moved up a week six years ago to avoid conflicts with the beginning of the school year. The picnic will again start at noon Saturday on the grounds of Fellowship Hall, followed by the Gratitude Meeting in the Big Room. (If you haven't been at the Hall since the expansion, the Big Room is now at the opposite end from where it was originally.) And, of course, the Ice Cream Social will be held in the lobby after the Saturday evening session.

But upon arriving, attendees will immediately notice that the check-in and registration process has been streamlined.

"That just seemed to be way too congested and time-consuming every year," said Judson. "So, with the help of the Hall staff, we figured out a way to make it work a lot smoother and quicker. We still encourage people to preregister, either through the Hall website or form in *The Gateway*, (see back page), but even walk-ups should be able to get registered in a matter of moments."

The order of speakers is also the same, but the speakers themselves promise to make this conference one for the books.

Friday's NA speaker is Amy K., from Candler, NC. Her "recovery charisma" led her to become a substance abuse counselor. Clean since the mid-'80's, Amy has international speaking experience as she addressed the 33rd World Convention of Narcotics Anonymous, held in August, 2009, in Barcelona, Spain. "We are grateful to have her," adds Judson.

Ralph W. grew up on the mean streets of South Central LA, in a large family, many of whom were alcoholics. "You'll be amazed at the hope in his message," assured Judson. "He's solid and positive by-the-book AA."

Following Ralph Saturday morning will be the Al-Anon speaker, Lynda B., from St. Paul, MN.

"We scored a coup by getting both her and her husband, Bob, who will be our Sunday speaker," disclosed Judson. "I like the idea of getting both perspectives. Bob is a big real estate tycoon who stayed dry without really getting sober in the program before he hit a bottom and started working the steps. And Lynda tells what it was like living with a dry drunk."

Saturday evening's keynote speaker will be Theresa F., from North Hollywood, CA "She stayed drunk literally her entire life," said Judson. "Her mom drank while she was pregnant, and the family would give her bourbon to keep her quiet as an infant. She was a real low-bottom drunk who has an amazing story. You come away saying, 'Wow, I can't believe anybody had that kind of life.'"

Hope to see you there!

### Employee Anniversaries

Third Quarter 2011

Rodney Battles	15 years	Gordon Rayle	9 years
Paul Carter	11 years	Mat Sandifer	8 years
Naimy Gonzalez	2 years	Richard Shaver	1 year
Elizabeth Ladd	23 years	Jessica Sheetz	1 year
Harold Ledford	18 years	Jackie Smith	1 year
Thomas Link	1 year	Mike Whaley	21 years
Rudy Murphy	5 years	Todd Williams	1 year
Connye Post	29 years	Willie Williams	20 years

*Fellowship Hall celebrates its  
40th Anniversary this year!  
Thank you for allowing us to be  
on your journey of recovery!*



### Continued from page 1: *Second Time's The Charm For Voice, In More Ways Than One*

thing they recommended. Everything."

The turning point came "when I decided to give Step 3 a chance."

"Every problem you could have in life, I felt like I was having," he continued. "I couldn't handle it all, and one day my counselor said, 'Consciously picture yourself taking your problems from your head and handing them to God. And if at the end of the day you haven't experienced any relief, go back to the way you've been doing it.' So I tried it and that evening I felt the best I've ever felt in my life. And I've been doing it every day since. That was the first evidence I'd seen that recovery works."

There will be further evidence August 4 when Judson calls the 2011 Fellowship Hall Annual Conference to order.

## Hall Takes Flight, Adds Wings, Expands Programs

*(This is Part Two of a three-part series on the history of Fellowship Hall. It will culminate with the Hall's official 40th anniversary celebration December 21, 2011.)*

After admitting its first guests on December 21, 1971, and being accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) in 1974, Fellowship Hall was clearly on its way to fulfilling its mission of helping the suffering alcoholic find a new way of life. But almost immediately, the Board of Directors and Executive Director Jamie



*Construction photo of the Main Entrance*

Carraway realized that the demand for their services was even greater than anticipated. As the waiting list for the initial 28 beds grew longer and longer, they launched their first capital campaign to expand the physical plant. Concurrently, they were also expanding and improving the various programs offered.

By 1974, a house was built on the grounds to serve as the Executive Director's residence, and some adjacent property was purchased, bringing the total acreage to 76.12. That property also had two existing homes that could be utilized by the Hall.

In 1975, a new wing was built, perpendicular to the original wing. It contained 10 semi-private rooms, which brought the capacity to 48, where it stayed until 2009. At the end of the wing, a large lounge-area was constructed. But more importantly than size, that wing became the "women's wing," as initially the Hall was only available to men.

That same year, armed with the knowledge that alcoholism affects the entire family, the Hall added a Family Therapy Department and debuted its Family Program. The four-day program has since become an integral — many would say necessary — part of the experience for parents, offspring, siblings, and significant others as well as the guests themselves.

It became apparent that some form of aftercare would be beneficial once guests had completed the 28-day program, so in 1978, the Aftercare Program was established. It was quickly expanded to include weekly group sessions for both the former guest and family members. It was eventually opened to local participants who had been treated at facilities other than Fellowship Hall.

Another construction project was undertaken in 1979. This one added an administrative wing, which housed intermediate therapy and family therapy counselors. Parallel to the initial 28-bed wing, this wing allowed more privacy in individual counseling sessions and a more professional and efficient method of operation.

The only other major expansion (until the recent 12-bed wing addition) came in 1987, with the construction of the family wing, behind and parallel to the women's wing. It contained classrooms, offices and an exercise room, as well as expanding the medical department.

By now, the Hall had begun holding "Conferences", where speakers were invited from all over the country to share their stories. They were initially held at the Hall, but quickly outgrew it, and moved to a local hotel. They were also held biannually, which explains why this year marks the Hall's 40th anniversary, but its 75th conference.

Obviously, drugs had become a part of the culture by the time Fellowship Hall came into existence. The early boards had to



*Construction photo of the original Men's Wing*

grapple with the question of whether to limit treatment solely to alcoholics or allow all forms of chemical dependency under its umbrella. Wisely, they opted for the latter.

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## Once You've Met Murphy, You Won't Forget Her

Since creating the position of Director of Development in 2001, Fellowship Hall has seen some gifted and dedicated individuals hold the post. Each has contributed to furthering the facility's mission of giving the gift of hope. But it is safe to say that the Hall has never seen anyone quite like its current director, Murphy Sullivan.

While each of her predecessors has been eminently qualified, Murphy comes to the position with an impressive resume that seems tailor-made for fundraising, public relations and marketing. But it is what is not on her resume that gives her a cachet that sets her apart in her field — Murphy is in recovery.

Hers is a story that is bound to resonate with the people inclined to give financial support to the Hall, and coupled with her buoyant personality, professional-yet-personable demeanor, and academic background, she is the ideal person to occupy her chair.

"I can't help but feel that everything I've done in life, the good and the bad, has led me to this point," she mused. "Right here, right now is where I'm supposed to be. This is the miracle of the program in action."

A native of Memphis, TN, Murphy grew up among privilege and politics.

"Our family was known as 'the Kennedys of the South,'" she recalled. "My great-grandfather ran for governor of Arkansas, and they all were either running for office or helping others get elected to office. The men were entrepreneurs, lawyers and journalists who drank too much, drove too fast, and chased women. People viewed us as the Irish characters that we were."

After earning her B.A. in political science from the University of Arkansas, where she was a Fulbright College Honors Scholar, and her M.A. in public administration from Saint Louis University, she naturally gravitated to the seat of power, Washington, D.C.

"Working in D.C. was like Mecca for me," she said. "People work hard and party hard and I fit right in. I had arrived."

Indeed, she worked on the staffs of some very notable political figures, including Andrew Cuomo, now the Governor of New York; Henry Cisneros, who later became Secretary of Housing and Urban Development; and Sen. J. William Fulbright himself, the man who indirectly helped put her through college. And, yes, there was one more, President Bill Clinton.

"Yes, I worked briefly at the White House," she noted. "I felt honored, but at the same time almost undeserving, because of my disease. I was the classic overachiever who never felt what

I did was good enough."

In 1995, she moved back to Missouri, where her career as a development director began in earnest. She worked for Beyond Housing, a non-profit organization devoted to securing affordable housing and community revitalization. She also was the statewide finance director for Missouri State Treasurer



*"I can't help but feel that everything I've done in life, the good and the bad, has led me to this point," she mused. "Right here, right now is where I'm supposed to be. This is the miracle of the program in action."*

Bob Holden in his bid for re-election and preparation for the governorship (which he won). "I had six months to raise nearly a million dollars from scratch, and I managed to do it," she said modestly.

From St. Louis, she moved to Charlotte to work for the city's Chamber of Commerce. As Vice President of Government Affairs, one of her tasks was to raise funds to bring the CIAA basketball tournament to town. Another included helping to secure \$99 million in gap funding for the North Carolina Turnpike Authority.

When the economy collapsed in 2008, she was laid off at the chamber and began a series of part-time and contract jobs, including a stint as Development Director at Health Reach, a low-income health clinic in Mooresville.

"I didn't realize it at the time, but that experience helped prepare me for here," she remarked. "You're providing healthcare, just like we are here, only a different kind of healthcare. It was great work."

Yet, even as she was providing healthcare to others, she was neglecting her own. Her marriage had fallen apart, and she found herself a single parent of two small daughters, Sarah and

Stevie, now 11 and 7, respectively. Plus, her drinking had reached the critical stage.

"If I could find a sitter, I was out of there," she sighed. "If there was a party, I found a way to get there."

But one night she didn't make it home from the party, getting in an argument with her best friend, storming out of her friend's house and telling her she'd walk home, even though it was about 10 miles away.

"I wound up at this BP gas station at three in the morning, in a sun dress and no shoes," she explained. "I decided I'd sleep there and was lying in the grass when the sprinklers went off. While I'm sitting there alone, soaking wet, I had one of those moments outside yourself. I said, 'What would my kids think if they saw me right now?' That was my moment of clarity.

"Finally, a friend came and got me, and the next morning was the lowest of the lows. I was done. I went to a meeting that

*Continued from page 3*

By the 1980s, treatment centers were proliferating and Fellowship Hall was being recognized for not only being one of the pioneers in the field, but one of the leaders. In 1982, it became the first private facility to be recognized with the Outstanding Program Award, given by the Addiction Professionals of North Carolina. It won the award again in 1989, this time being saluted for developing a Relapse Prevention component and incorporating it into its program.

Around that time, a book came out by Linda Sunshine and John Wright titled *The 100 Best Treatment Centers*, and they included Fellowship Hall. While no official rankings



*Construction photo of the Day Room*

are kept, it is widely recognized that Fellowship Hall is among the finest and most respected facilities of its kind in the nation.

*Construction photos were provided by Judy, and her late husband Wade, Johnson.*

*(Next issue — The Rodney Battles era ushers in a period of visionary growth and expansion.)*

*Continued from page 4*

night in Lake Norman, and I never felt so much unconditional love in my life as when I walked in that room of AA.”

Although dealing with life on life’s terms since June 24, 2009, Murphy admits it hasn’t been easy at times.

“I lost two friends to alcoholism within a year, and then my dad last November,” she said somberly. “I knew I was on the right track, but I wasn’t dealing with it very well. Plus, I still hadn’t found a full-time job.” She added, “I knew to trust in my Higher Power one day at a time, show up and do my part and let the members of AA carry me through it.”






Then, a couple of weeks after her father died, a member of her home group asked her what kind of work she did. Remarkably, he happened to know that Fellowship Hall was looking for a development director.

“That’s why when I tell you it’s a miracle that I’m here today, I mean it literally,” she grinned. “I could not have possibly planned this myself.”



*Construction photo of the Rear of Cafeteria*

### Important Dates in Hall History

-  By 1974, a house was built on the grounds to serve as the Executive Director’s residence, and some adjacent property was purchased, bringing the total acreage to 76.
-  In 1975, a new wing was built; it contained 10 semi-private rooms, which brought the capacity to 48, where it stayed until 2009.
-  In 1975, the Hall added a Family Therapy Department and debuted its Family Program.
-  In 1978, the Aftercare Program was established.
-  In 1982, Fellowship Hall became the first private facility to be recognized with the Outstanding Program Award, given by the Addiction Professionals of North Carolina.

Today, on the job since March, Murphy seems completely at peace with herself and her surroundings. She understands her role as a mom and as a development director are inextricably linked to her role as a member in good standing of AA. “My self-esteem used to be so wrapped up in my career,” she mused, “but not today. Once I let go of that career identity is when the miracle happened. Today I’m happy to be just another bozo on the bus.”

Holding an origami puzzle her daughter Sarah made for her, she commented, “To be present for my children, that means more to me than the picture of me with President Clinton or any of the other things I’ve accomplished. Today I have purpose, to be a mom, to help other alcoholics, and to do something every day to help facilitate the goals of Fellowship Hall. To be able to leave a job with a smile on my face every night and go home and be a mom is a joy beyond words. That’s the proof that the promises do come true.”

## *Ogi & The Old-Timers*

### **Of Synchronicity, Miracles and Angels**

Normally, I don't reveal much about my home life, for a couple of reasons. Oh, I've mentioned many times in many columns over the years that my wife suffers from chronic progressive



MS, but I spare the details, first because they are too personal and second because we all have our crosses to bear, and I refuse to play the sympathy card. And, frankly, if I were to go into the particulars about the indignities we bear, it would be a case of TMI (too much information). When folks ask how Janet is doing, they want to hear the basic "fine." And even though she's not, that's what they hear from me.

But, I am going to make an exception here, again for a couple of reasons. If this were for public consumption, I would not broach the subject, but since it's only intended for my fellows in recovery — folks who know how to keep things in confidence — the rules are a bit different. More importantly, there's a lesson here, and unless one knows the full situation, the moral of the story will be lost. So, with apologies to my wife, here goes.

One recent sweltering afternoon I stopped by Costco after work to pick up some of her medications. On the way home, I received a cell phone call from CPI, our "fallen and I can't get up" service, saying that she had, indeed, fallen, wanting to know how quickly I could be home and whether they should call EMS. This was not the first time this has happened, so I told them I was seven or eight minutes from home and to just stay on the line with her. Turns out I was closer to 12 minutes away, and several minutes later they called back asking how far and saying she wasn't responding. By then I was barreling down the home stretch, and when I got there, she was on the verge of losing consciousness. She hadn't fallen, but had leaned over to pick up something off the floor and was dangling by her wheelchair's seat belt upside down, the blood rushing to her head. Her skin was getting clammy, her face was flushed, and she'd already thrown up, with some of it running into her nose, impairing her breathing. (See, this is why I keep the details to myself.)

I got her bathed, fed and put to bed, and in a couple of hours, she was feeling better; and by the next day was seemingly none the worse for the ordeal. To paraphrase W.C. Fields, "Kid's a trooper." So, that's the setup; here's the story.

To backtrack, as I was leaving Costco, there was a guy standing near my car talking on his cell phone. I overheard him say, "I don't know what to do. Those things cost about a hundred dollars." Then, as I was reaching into my pocket for my keys he approached me, held up a Toyota key and politely asked, "Did you lose this?" Unbelievably, I looked at my key chain and there was one missing — the one he was holding in his hand. Somehow, as I was locking the car remotely, it must have come loose from the chain.

Naturally, I thanked him profusely several times, the final time reaching out to shake his hand. Moments later I thought I should have gotten his name, but he had already disappeared into the crowded parking lot.



*One of my departed heroes, late Fellowship Hall board member Clarence Pritchett, used to end his AA talk with the admonition, "Whether you believe it or not, there are angels among us. Look around, there may be one sitting next to you right now."*

Not five minutes later came the call from CPI, and I began to grasp the enormity of what had just happened. Suppose I had been stranded in the parking lot, with no way to get home to her? A bad situation could have been made worse, but at least, I reasoned, CPI would have been able to contact the emergency personnel, and they'd have responded.

But then it slammed me like a Stan Musial signature Louisville Slugger. When CPI called, I had reached over onto the seat to grab the phone, not into my shirt pocket. Because I was wearing a polo shirt without a pocket, I had inadvertently left the phone in the car. Which means CPI would not have been able to reach me. Which means they would have eventually called EMS. Which means that in the time elapsed before they called them, coupled with their typical response time of a half hour (remember, I said this has happened before) ... well, you catch my drift. It could've been too late.

One of my departed heroes, late Fellowship Hall board member Clarence Pritchett, used to end his AA talk with the admonition, "Whether you believe it or not, there are angels among us. Look around, there may be one sitting

next to you right now."

I never doubted Clarence's words of wisdom. And I'm pretty sure there was one in a Costco parking lot on a Monday afternoon in June.

*(Ogi's not exactly an old-timer, but he does hang around a lot of them.)*

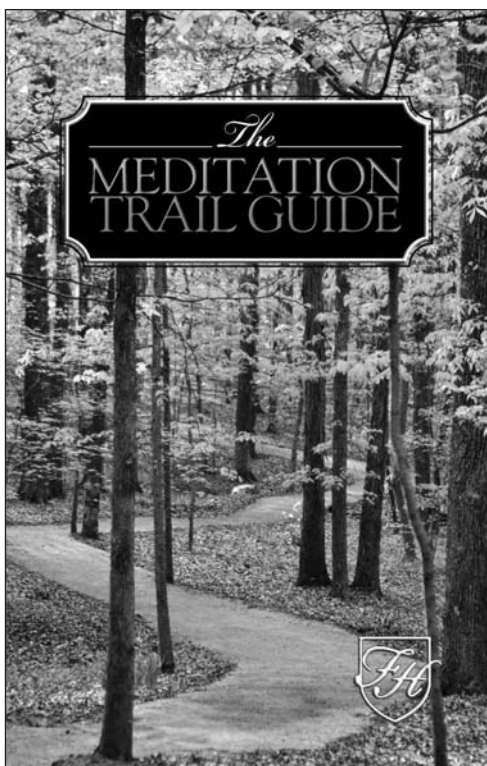
## Hall Happenings

### The Meditation Trail Guide

The Meditation Trail has long been one of the features that gives Fellowship Hall its unique stature in the recovery community. Over the years, it has been lovingly refined, upgraded and landscaped, so that it now serves as a model for other facilities of its kind.

And now, it also has a full-color, twenty-page guide that explains how each garden along the trail corresponds to each of the Twelve Steps. In words and pictures, it poignantly illustrates how its winding, shaded path through the woods and beside the pond mirrors the spiritual journey we are undertaking.

Next issue of *The Gateway* will tell the full story of its genesis, growth and evolution.



## Fellowship Hall Conference on Alcoholism and Addiction

**August 5, 6 & 7, 2011**

Marriott-Downtown Greensboro

Pre-register online until noon, August 3 at [www.fellowshiphall.com](http://www.fellowshiphall.com) or complete the form on the back and send it with your check to Fellowship Hall. For more information, please call Fellowship Hall at 800.659.3381



### Conference Agenda

#### Friday, August 5

**8:00 p.m.** Opening Remarks - Southern Crescent Ballroom  
**Speaker:** Amy K. - Candler, NC

#### Saturday, August 6

**9:00 a.m.** **Speaker:** Ralph W. - Los Angeles, CA  
 Southern Crescent Ballroom

**10:30 a.m.** **Speaker:** Lynda B. - St. Paul, MN  
 Southern Crescent Ballroom

**12:00 p.m.** Picnic - Fellowship Hall

**2:00 p.m.** Gratitude Meeting - The Big Room at Fellowship Hall

**8:00 p.m.** **Speaker:** Theresa F. - North Hollywood, CA  
 Southern Crescent Ballroom

**9:30 p.m.** Ice Cream Social - Southern Crescent Ballroom

#### Sunday, August 7

**10:00 a.m.** **Speaker:** Bob B. - St. Paul, MN  
 Southern Crescent Ballroom



### Be a friend of Ray!

It's not too late to be a friend of Ray or sponsor of our golf tournament. 100% of the proceeds go to help our guests in-need! Please see our website at: [www.fellowshiphall.com](http://www.fellowshiphall.com) or call Murphy 621-3381 by July 29th for more info.

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Return Service Requested



# Fellowship Hall Annual Conference

**August 5, 6 & 7, 2011**  
**Greensboro Marriott Downtown**  
**336.379.8000 or 336.387.8007**

For more information, call 800.659.3381 or register online until noon, August 3 at [www.fellowshiphall.com](http://www.fellowshiphall.com) or simply fill out the form below and mail it with your check to:

**Fellowship Hall Conference**  
**P. O. Box 13890**  
**Greensboro, NC 27415**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone (H): \_\_\_\_\_ (M): \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Pre-registration cost for all sessions is \$15 per person or \$10 per person per day. Enclosed is my check or money order for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ . Make checks payable to: Fellowship Hall.

Note: Registrations at the Conference for all sessions will be \$20 per person or \$10 per person per day.

Name(s), city and state to be printed on badge(s):  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Number attending Hall picnic \_\_\_\_\_  
(\$5 per person payable at the picnic)

*Email suggestions, submissions for The Gateway, and requests to be placed on our mailing list to [mark@fellowshiphall.com](mailto:mark@fellowshiphall.com)*

