
Marcia Freer

Marcia Freer was part of the Church in Urban Life Project in the summer of 1960.

My experience in New York City, presided over by Howard Moody and Joe and Judy Pickle, was very influential in my life. The program contributed mightily to my becoming a New Yorker for three years, while my then husband, Don Ferrell, attended Union Theological Seminary.

I still identify myself as an erstwhile New Yorker. Every year I bring ten to twelve college students to the city for two weeks in January for an interterm session patterned after the experience I had at Judson so many years ago. I guess you could say I have become a “bridge person,” introducing Nebraska students to various aspects of the city, from living with families in East Harlem; to visiting Covenant House, Fountain House, and Phoenix House; to attending the Metropolitan Opera. I am able to help midwestern students become comfortable in New York City because Howard, Joe, and Judy first extended that possibility to me.

The Judson House memory that occurs to me specifically is of Willie Mae, our wonderful African-American cook, who delighted and cared for us all, cooking for us in good humor and with gusto. I remember one night she served us *tongue*. Of course, she did not tell us what it was until after we had eaten it (it was good!).

Our group went to see *Raisin in the Sun*. I also remember visiting Father Divine’s church in Harlem and having a huge family-style dinner there. I also did some research in a nursing home in Queens.

During the day I worked at a firm on John Street in the financial district. At night I went to street dances, ate Italian ices, and hung out in Washington Square Park.

How fortunate I was to make the acquaintance of New York City in this way.

MARCIA FREER

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