



# Intercom

duke university medical center

VOLUME 16, NUMBER 3

MARCH, 1969

DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

## 'Clinic for the Soul' Opens in Hospital

The medical center has diagnostic and treatment facilities for almost every family of disease known to man.

But the newest "clinic" here is one that doesn't deal with physical complaints. Those who visit it might bring a sorrow instead of a symptom; a plea instead of a pain; or simply a word of thanksgiving.

This new "clinic for the spirit" is the Allen Memorial Chapel, an interfaith center of worship located where the old hospital lobby used to be.

The chapel, a dream of Chaplain Wesley Aitken since he came to Duke as the hospital's first fulltime chaplain in 1956, was named for the late George Garland Allen, a chairman of the Duke Endowment Trustees. At Mr. Allen's death several years ago, his family asked that instead of floral tributes contributions in his name be made to a chapel fund at the hospital.

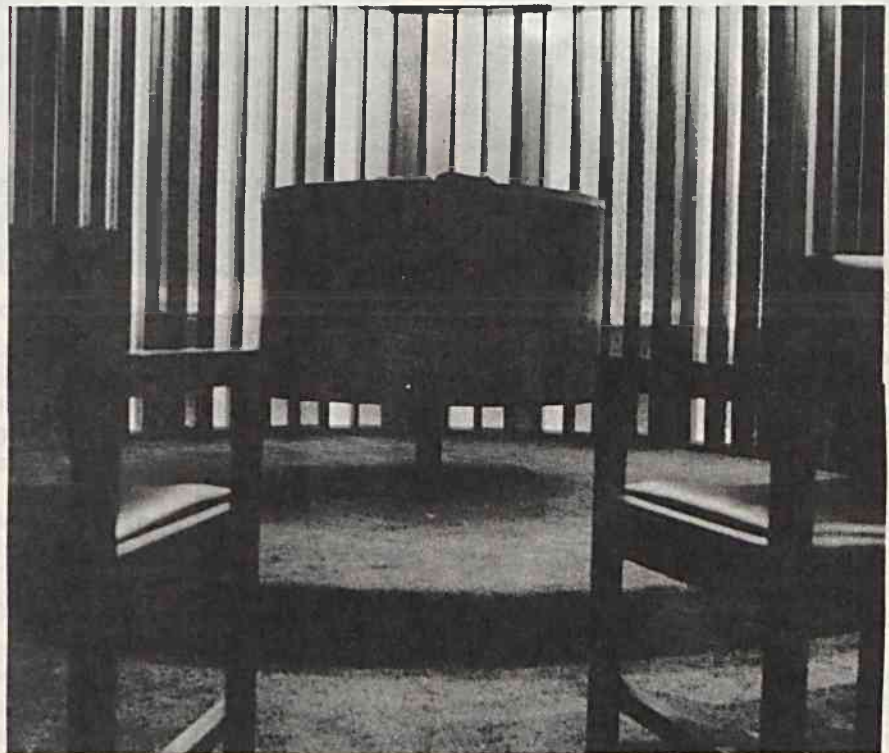
Over the years other families made similar requests until today the \$30,000 Allen Memorial Chapel not only is a tribute to the man whose name it carries but also is a memorial to many others.

A permanent record of all contributors will be made and placed in the chapel when it is dedicated.

Perhaps the most eye-catching feature of the small chapel, which has 24 seats, is the circular altar, which Chaplain Aitken said "provides freedom of access. Its very design makes people want to walk up to it."

It was designed that way in part to accommodate the half-circle of a bay window behind the altar site, but also to make it acceptable to any person of any faith.

Chaplain Aitken consulted with persons of different faiths, including Msgr. James E. McSweeney, pastor of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Dur-



**ALLEN MEMORIAL CHAPEL**—The circular altar of the new hospital chapel provides freedom of access for all who enter. The chapel, located off the first floor corridor near the main lobby, is open for patients, visitors, staff, faculty, employes and students. *(photo by Tom Knight)*

ham, and Rabbi Herbert Berger and Rabbi E. M. Rosenzweig, both of Durham.

The altar design was acceptable from the Protestant, Catholic, Jewish and non-sectarian points of view, Chaplain Aitken said, but he recalled that "Msgr. McSweeney asked if we could make it exactly 39 inches high."

That is the height, the priest explained, of all Roman Catholic altars, and priests become accustomed to per-

forming the rituals of the mass at that level.

Chaplain Aitken checked the specifications for the altar and found it was planned to be 36 inches high. A change order was put into the contract and the finished altar is 39 inches high.

The altar is free of any specific religious symbols except for a Bible which lies open on top of it. People may carry their own symbols to the altar when they

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