

Church
of the
Brethren

MESSENGER

APRIL 2008 WWW.BRETHREN.ORG



300 YEARS OF BEING BRETHREN

1858-1908
Together and apart



HIGHER EDUCATION AND RENEWAL • A MAGICAL MINISTRY • GOSPEL OF LUKE

2008 Annual Conference

Congregational Life Ministries Dinner

Tuesday, July 15

Launching a Spiritual Strategic Journey

Rev. George Bullard, D. Min.

Rev. Bullard will speak about the practical steps of engaging in a Spiritual Strategic Journey with a focus on 100 Days of Discernment and Living into the Future Story.



George is widely recognized as an advisor to denominational leaders, a futurist, a strategic planning expert, a group process facilitator, a church growth strategist, an authority in conflict management, and a writer. He has extensively developed a life cycle model for congregations, which helps congregational leaders know what types of assistance they may need to best facilitate growth.

Cross Cultural Luncheon

Monday, July 14

Join us for music and fellowship that
celebrates the diverse cultural traditions
within the Church of the Brethren.

For tickets, call the Annual Conference office at 800-688-5186.

Congregational Life Ministries
is a program of the Church of
the Brethren General Board
www.brethren.org



“... publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works” (Psa. 26:7b KJV).

Church
of the
Brethren

MESSENGER

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8 300 years of being Brethren: Together and apart (1858-1908)

Leaders such as John Kline (p. 8) and James Quinter (p. 10) provided steady hands and a commitment to the church that helped it navigate some troubled waters of war and change. As differing visions for the church's future emerged, however, the Brethren fabric tore (p. 12). But mission and ministry pressed on, with major mission work in India (p. 14) beginning by the end of the century.

15 A route to renewal

Elizabethtown College president Theodore Long says that the Brethren colleges may offer models for the church in

keeping the essentials of Brethren heritage while meeting the needs and realities of a new generation and a new time.

18 The message in the magic

Brethren college student Brett Myers makes things vanish with the goal of making Jesus Christ visible. Outreach and evangelism take center stage when he takes his magic act on the road.

20 Luke: Jesus the Son of Man

The third Gospel of our New Testament emphasizes the poor and marginalized as Luke the physician focuses on Jesus' humanity and his kindness, with numerous stories unique to this book.

Albert Winkler / Courtesy of BHLA



Courtesy of Brett Myers



ONTHECOVER

From 1858 to 1908: The 300th anniversary series moves through the latter half of the 19th century with a look at another 50-year period of our Brethren heritage. The stories this month visit an era when Brethren stayed together through the Civil War before experiencing schisms of their own. Images are of the memorial erected 50 years after Kline's death in Virginia; the Dunker Meeting House on the Antietam Battlefield in Maryland (taken by Alexander Gardner in 1862); and an image of Kline by from the murals at Camp Mack by Medford Neher.

DEPARTMENTS

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The US Postal Service just returned an undeliverable letter to the Messenger office. Arriving in a plastic bag with the standard apology, the tattered envelope looked as if it had been lost in a damp corner for quite a long time.

The date of the letter: August 1984 (see story, p. 4).

One has to admire the Postal Service's dogged commitment to get that letter delivered, no matter how late. A less diligent agency might have glanced at the contents and decided it wasn't worth returning 24 years later. Which it wasn't. It was simply part of a long-ago mailing to congregational Messenger representatives. Looking a little more closely, we saw that the letter was accompanied by a flier encouraging the purchase of subscriptions for college students—people who by now are sending off a new generation of students to college.

Thankfully, most of our mail gets delivered on time and to the right person. But ultimately our concern is not so much with words printed on paper, even though that's what a magazine is. Rather, the church's communication is about living letters of faith. And living letters can take a generation or more to bear fruit.



WENDY McFADDEN
Publisher

Today we are enriched and nourished by the letters that come to us from our spiritual ancestors—men and women who have shaped the Church of the Brethren over its 300 years. When we read their words, or the words that others have written about them, we see how their lives have been inscribed on our hearts. We treasure these words not in order to glory in the past but because they remind us who we are—and thus propel us into the future.

"You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, to be known and read by all; and you show that you are a letter of Christ . . . written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts" (2 Cor. 3:2-3).

As we thank God for those who have been living letters for us, we can also consider our own spiritual descendants. What are we writing for them?

Wendy McFadden

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To view the official Church of the Brethren website, go to www.brethren.org.

A free study guide for each issue of MESSENGER is available on the site; go to keyword "MESSENGER" and click on the study guide link.

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Coming to the garden together

Ninth Street honors 300th anniversary with service project

The goal: 300 pounds of food for the hungry. The method: A community garden cared for by fewer than 30 youth and families of Ninth Street Church of the Brethren in Virlina District. The harvest: More than 4,200 pounds of fresh produce given to the Roanoke (Va.) City Rescue Mission, older members of the congregation, and neighbors of the church.

The question was, "How can we be visible in our city church in a way that will both honor our heritage and introduce our theology to the community?" Banners, balloons, and fellowship hall parties are fun for us, but did not seem to satisfy how we intended to celebrate the Church of the Brethren.

We are located in a transient part of the city, not far from Roanoke's downtown with its litter, homeless people, and battered women's shelter. One benefit we have as a congregation is that many of our members live in the suburbs, with access to acres of land and garden spots. So the idea grew like a seed planted in fertile earth: We would try to grow and give away 300 pounds of garden vegetables to emphasize our anniversary year.

A couple with a garden patch to share offered their land. It was over 30 minutes away from most of the workers, but we loved the idea of working together. So we planted potatoes in the cold months and harvested bushels of them in the heat of the summer. Onions, beets, tomatoes, cabbages, blackberries, corn, green beans, cucumbers, radishes, squash, zucchini, watermelons, and pumpkins seemed to grow overnight.

Youth who had never worked a garden before learned how to plant, weed, and harvest. The fellowship was an added benefit. People told stories while stooping and picking beans and digging potatoes. Treasured family tools were discussed: "This one belonged to my granddaddy," "I used this shovel to dig the foundation to my house," "I bet this hoe is over 60 years old."

The jobs were effortless and quickly completed. The church hosted a harvest meal at an old cabin to celebrate and enjoy the fruits of our labor. More importantly, the area food bank received fresh produce, and we are told they made squash casserole and pots and pots of mashed potatoes thanks to the donations bundled up and dropped off weekly. Neighbors in a predominantly low-income, high-rental neighborhood were also given fresh produce as a ministry to our community.

To finish the celebration, 50 pumpkin pies were baked around Thanksgiving and cut into 300 slices for the rescue mission. The congregation was overwhelmed, and ready to do it again in 2008. You will not believe all that will grow and be shared, in more than 300 ways!—Mary Sink St. John



Mary Sink St. John

Members of Roanoke's Ninth Street Church of the Brethren celebrated the denomination's 300th anniversary with a garden project this past year.

Northeast Middle Pennsylvania will combine a heritage fair with its district conference this fall at Camp Blue Diamond (Petersburg, Pa.). It will include a "sing through 300 years of hymnody" led by Nancy Faus. . . . The Ephrata Cloister Choir gave a concert at Bermudian Church of the Brethren (East Berlin, Pa.) on March 1. . . . The Brethren Home Community/Cross Keys Village (New Oxford, Pa.) in November hosted a delegation of specialists in aging from China.

Southeast An Anabaptist conference titled "Bridging Divides: Uniting the Church for Peacemaking" will be held April 11-12 in Washington, D.C. Oakton Church of the Brethren (Vienna, Va.) pastor Chris Bowman and Church of the Brethren Washington Office director Phil Jones are among the speakers. . . . Southeastern District is planning an adult fellowship rally April 27 at French Broad Church of the Brethren (White Pine, Tenn.), featuring Annual Conference moderator Jim Beckwith. . . . Virlina District's second "Mother Churches Bus Tour" was scheduled for April 12.

Midwest Highland Avenue Church of the Brethren (Elgin, Ill.) hosted a concert by Brethren folksingers Andy and Terry Murray March 2 as the kickoff for its celebration of the denomination's 300th anniversary. . . . Southern Ohio held a district-wide worship service to celebrate the 300th anniversary Jan. 13 at West Alexandria Church of the Brethren, featuring Bethany Theological Seminary president Ruthann Knechel Johansen. . . . Camp Brethren Heights (Rodney, Mich.) will hold an open house May 17.

Ozarks/Plains Western Plains District has given the green light to a new church start project in inner-city Denver, Colo., led by Jeff Neuman-Lee. . . . The "Gathering IV" revitalization conference for congregations in Western Plains and partners in neighboring districts is scheduled for Oct. 24-26 in Salina, Kan., with an evangelism focus.

West The Pacific Southwest District board in January called Carrie Cesar as intergenerational ministry director and Alfredo Cesar as intercultural ministry director. The couple lives in Mesa, Ariz. . . . The Bowmont Community (Nampa, Idaho) congregation assembled 44 fruit and candy baskets to distribute to low-income seniors in the area and a local nursing home. . . . Camp Myrtlewood (Myrtle Point, Ore.) will host this year's Outdoor Ministries Association directors and managers retreat, Nov. 16-20.



"Each of the twists and turns of our lives has God written all over it."

—David Whitten, General Board mission coordinator in Nigeria, reflecting on God's presence in his work

BY THE NUMBERS

587

Number of fluorescent fixtures replaced this winter at the Church of the Brethren offices in Elgin, Ill. Buildings and Grounds staff made the switch from T12 lamps to more energy-efficient T8's in an effort to be "greener" and reduce utility bills. All tubes and ballasts in every fixture were changed.



23 years after it was mailed.

The envelope, now wrinkled and stained with some water damage but otherwise intact, was addressed to a representative at Carson Valley Church of the Brethren in Duncansville, Pa. It came back marked "Undeliverable as addressed. Forwarding order expired."

The mailing contained a preview of the September 1984 issue of MESSENGER and information on subscriptions for college students, with a form for sending in new subscriber information. The cover letter, from then-promotion consultant Ken Gible, is dated August 1984.

If anyone at Carson Valley has been waiting to subscribe, please give us a call!

Wayward mailing finally finds its way back home

Maybe that person who said the check was in the mail was telling the truth. An envelope sent from the MESSENGER office to a congregational representative in Pennsylvania was returned by the US Postal Service in February—more than

Brethren historical figures visit present-day churches

Two Church of the Brethren congregations were among those who received a visit from leaders out of the Brethren history books this winter.

People at Waynesboro (Pa.) Church of the Brethren were asking, "Who is that sitting at the front of the sanctuary?" during worship on Jan. 6. It proved to be Alexander Mack Sr., who made a surprise visit to the congregation to kick off its celebration of the denomination's 300th anniversary.

Mack, portrayed by Dennis Bechard, said he was in the area to visit the old home- stead and grave of his middle son, Johannes, who lived and is buried near Waynesboro. Mack briefly shared his memories of the early years of the Brethren and was introduced to some of his direct descendants in the congregation.

Waynesboro's year-long anniversary celebration will include showing Brethren history slides, a local Brethren



Prue Yelinek

Alexander Mack Sr., as portrayed by drama enthusiast Dennis Bechard, stopped by Waynesboro (Pa.) Church of the Brethren in January.

history tour, a congregational float in local parades, an early Brethren worship service, a 300th anniversary picnic, and a trip to the historic Ephrata (Pa.) Cloister.

The Modesto (Calif.) congregation, meanwhile, was entertained Jan. 21 by Anna Mow and John Kline during a 30-minute drama sponsored by the senior ministry committee. The two historical figures dialogued about several areas of Brethren history, talked about each other's experiences, and connected history to the present.

Kelsey Boardman, a member of the Youth Heritage Team for Pacific Southwest District, played Anna Mow, while her grandfather, Felton Daniels, authored the drama and portrayed John Kline. (Copies of the drama are available for free by contacting Noelle@modcob.org.)

(Prue Yelinek and Felton Daniels contributed to this article.)

McPherson students help with clean-up after storms

On Jan. 12, 92 McPherson (Kan.) College students and 14 faculty and staff members using 14 pick-up trucks, one dump



Courtesy of Felton Daniels

Felton Daniels, left, portrays John Kline, while his granddaughter Kelsey Boardman portrays Anna Mow during a "visit" to Modesto (Calif.) Church of the Brethren.

One happy camper: Camp Brethren Heights (Rodney, Mich.) saw its share of snow this winter, and campers at the first winter family camp there made the most of it. Like many Brethren who went to camp for events this winter, this snowman came away wearing a smile.



Jennifer Crispin

truck, one feed truck, and two trailers, made 66 trips to the local dump with tree limbs collected from yards in the town of McPherson town.

A massive December ice storm had taken down limbs from trees in 95 percent of all the yards in town, initially closing some streets. The town was overwhelmed with the quantity of downed limbs.

Members of the college's football team, men's and women's soccer teams, women's softball team, and various other students worked in groups of six to 10.

"We simply showed up at people's front doors and asked if they wanted their downed tree limbs taken away," McPherson campus minister Tom Hurst reported. "With the town of McPherson deciding that tree limb cleanup was the responsibility of individual homeowners, elderly and low-income homeowners were struggling with how to rid their lawns of their tree limbs."

As this group of McPherson College students, faculty, and staff descended on mapped-out areas of the town, homeowners all over McPherson saw the helpfulness of young people. And the college found another way to help fulfill its mission to "develop whole persons through scholarship, participation, and service."

REMEMBERED

• **Lena M. Wirth**, 89, died Feb. 24 in Modesto, Calif. Born in Empire, Calif., she was a career Church of the Brethren mission nurse and midwife in Nigeria, where she worked from 1944 to 1974. She served at the mission hospital in Garkida, where she also worked at the Garkida Leprosy settlement and in the nursery for well babies at the leprosarium. She also later worked in the communities of Lassa, Biu, and Marama. She attended La Verne (Calif.) College, now the University of La Verne, and was a member of Modesto Church of the Brethren, most recently living at Casa de Modesto. A memorial service was held March 8 at Modesto.

• **Donald J. Dunn**, dean of the University of La Verne College of Law since 2003, died Jan. 5 at home. While at La Verne, he guided the law school through the process of applying for national accreditation, with the American Bar Association granting provisional ABA approval in 2006. Previously, Dunn was a nationally recognized law librarian whose 38-year career began at the University of Texas.

Global Ministries Dinner



Immigration and Farm Labor: Toward Faithful Policy

Baldemar Velásquez, President
Farm Labor Organizing Committee, AFL-CIO

This highly respected national and international leader challenges Christians to apply faith values to the current immigration debate.

Global Ministries Dinner, 5 p.m.
Monday, July 14, 2008
in Salon E of the Richmond (Va.) Marriott



Also: Nationally-known folk singer Peg Lehman, whose songs promote peace and social justice, will entertain with vocal and instrumental selections.



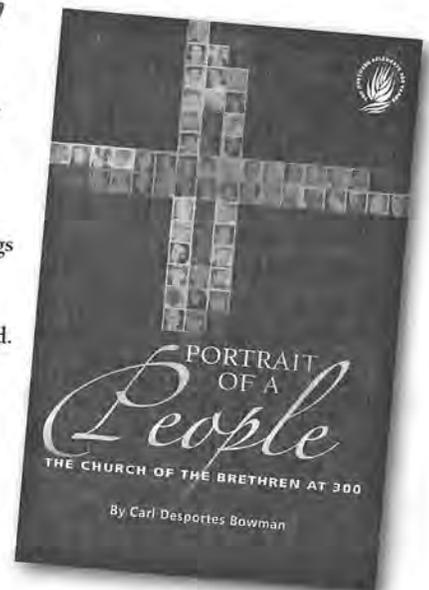
PORTRAIT OF A People

THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN AT 300

Portrait of a People summarizes the findings of the Brethren Member Profile 2006, the most comprehensive and representative survey of Brethren members ever conducted. Sociologist Carl Desportes Bowman, who directed the study, reports on a wide range of new information—Brethren beliefs about God and the afterlife; attitudes about military service, abortion, and politics; practices in the areas of personal Bible study, worship, and love feast; and much more. Readers will find themselves surprised, pleased, and dismayed. All will find themselves better informed about the people who call themselves Brethren.

"This is a story that every member of the Church of the Brethren should read."
—Donald B. Kraybill

\$15.95 pack of 5 for \$60



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Purity vs. mission

Read Acts 15:1-21.

One of the first dilemmas the early church faced was the question of continuity between the children of Abraham and Sarah and the followers of Jesus. In other words, how Jewish did a Christian have to be to be a real Christian?

In Acts 15 the question was whether male converts to Christianity needed to be circumcised. How this “purity” question was answered had a dramatic effect on the ability of the apostles to be in “mission” with the Gentiles.



RON FAUS

• • •
The Church of the Brethren is a “primitivist” tradition, meaning that we believe the best Christianity came earliest, as described by the teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount and enacted by the early church. Purity of thought and practice has always been important. But as in the book of Acts, purity can come into conflict with mission.

Keeping our gene pool relatively pure has been a focus down through the years. Bethany Theological Seminary professor and church leader William Beahm was known to “match-make” along pure Brethren bloodlines. “She would make you a good wife; she has Kulp blood, you know.”

Beahm was attending a banquet at Elizabethtown College when Harold Bomberger introduced him to his date, Betty Mann, from a non-Brethren Christian tradition. Beahm could not recall a Mann family from his Brethren genealogical memory banks, so he leaned over to Bomberger to ask: “Is this Mann woman a Brethren sister?” (As quoted in *A Raspberry Seed Under God’s Denture*, Fike, p. 86)

This ethnic purity seems harmless enough, as innocuous as playing the “Brethren name game.” This longing for purity does affect our mission, however. A recent émigré from

the requests were met with extreme bureaucratic inertia that I can only categorize as sin.

In Luke’s writings—the Gospel of Luke and Acts of the Apostles—mission almost always wins out over purity. Outsiders are made insiders through the teachings of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit. Think of the unclean who were healed, the foreigners reached through the tongues of Pentecost, the faith of Roman soldiers that brought salvation to their house.

Historian Floyd Mallott blamed the industrialization of the United States, and desires among the Brethren to “fit in,” for the loss of some pure practices of the Brethren. “A Dunker (and his bride) got in the car and stepped on the gas. The first thing that blew off was his broad-brimmed hat. Then his wife’s bonnet. Finally, his whiskers.” (As quoted in *Moving Toward the Mainstream*, Fitzkee.)

Moving toward “fitting in” can also be a movement toward mission with those outside one’s group. Giving up plain dress may have opened opportunities to connect in transformative ways with the “fancy.”

Imagine how different our history in the 20th century might have been if we hadn’t changed our name from “German Baptist Brethren” to “Church of the Brethren” just a few years before Germans were enemies of the United States in World War I. The name change was due, in part, to church life being conducted more and more in English, rather than German—a movement in mission toward an English-speaking society.

• • •
Because of our primitivist roots and historical commitment to unity of practice, any change brings with it the question of whether the church will still be “Brethren” if the change is enacted. New worship style? That’s not Brethren! What exactly does constitute Brethren worship is hard to determine. Is it worship designed to mimic mainline Protestant services of the ‘40s and ‘50s, or informal worship using lined hymns begun with a tuning fork for pitch? (There doesn’t seem to be much energy around going back to that kind of Brethren worship.)

How did the question of circumcision of Gentiles get solved in Acts 15? Through conversation, debate, and compromise: “Therefore I have reached the decision that we should not trouble those Gentiles who are turning to God, but we should write to them to abstain only from things polluted by idols and from fornication and from whatever has been strangled and from blood” (Acts 15:19-20).

Giving up one form of purity (circumcision) was made tenable by reinforcing other forms of purity (abstaining from fornication and non-kosher foods). This compromise made continued mission with the Gentiles much more likely. What compromises on purity within our tradition are we willing to make to be in mission with those around us? **W**

Ronald E. H. Faus is an ordained minister in the Church of the Brethren. He is serving as interim associate pastor at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale, Ariz.

IN LUKE’S WRITINGS . . . OUTSIDERS ARE MADE INSIDERS THROUGH THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS AND THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. THINK OF THE UNCLEAN WHO WERE HEALED, THE FOREIGNERS REACHED THROUGH THE TONGUES OF PENTECOST, THE FAITH OF ROMAN SOLDIERS . . .

Virginia was visiting a Church of the Brethren congregation in Arizona. Three different church members became very excited upon hearing she was from Virginia and asked individually, “Are you Brethren?” She wasn’t. And after being asked three separate times and disappointing those asking, she got the message and never returned.

When I served on the denominational New Church Development Committee, the most enthusiastic and motivated church planters I met were Hispanic. When they asked for basic Brethren materials to be translated into Spanish,

QUOTE WORTHY

“We have exchanged the cross and the tomb with a benign Christianity that we simply join. We have gone from a passion to a yawn.”

—Barry Carpenter, senior pastor of Frazer Memorial United Methodist Church in Montgomery, Ala., and a consultant in leadership training for church revitalization. He was quoted in *The United Methodist Reporter*.

“My sense is that if Jesus were here he would do the right thing, without needing a political strategist giving him what he thinks people want to hear.”

—Stephen Heffner, creator of the election-season www.Jesusin2008.com website, which launched in January (RNS)

“Art is the language of the soul, and the true artist is an agent of change.”

—actor Robert Redford, speaking at this year’s Sundance Film Festival (RNS)

“It is true that there is no peace without justice; it is also true that there is no justice without peace.”

—the Rev. Clifton Kirkpatrick, stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, while leading an ecumenical delegation to violence-ravaged Kenya (WCC News Service)

“Science explains how things work, but not necessarily why. Religion gives you the why to it.”

—Robert Greenberger, a science teacher and member of the United Church of Christ. He was quoted in the *United Church News*.

“For some time now, the hands and feet of the body of Christ have been amputated, and we’ve been pretty much reduced to a big mouth. We talk more than we do.”

—megachurch pastor Rick Warren, commenting on the book *UnChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks About Christianity* (RNS)

“We don’t want to be so focused on the way things must be done that we lose the wonder of being found by God.”

—Russell Muilenburg, writing in the September 2007 issue of *The Church Herald* (Reformed Church in America)

CULTUREVIEW

• The Rev. **Clifton Kirkpatrick**, the highest elected official in the Presbyterian Church (USA), has announced that he will step down as stated clerk when his term ends in June. (RNS)

• The **US Religious Landscape Survey** found that more than a quarter of American adults have left the faith of their childhood in favor of another religion, or no religion at all. If change in affiliation from one type of Protestantism to another is included, roughly 44 percent of American adults have either switched religious affiliation, moved from being unaffiliated with any religion to being affiliated with a particular faith, or dropped any connection to a specific religious tradition altogether.

• Donald B. Kraybill, Steve Nolt, and David Weaver-Zercher, authors of the book ***Amish Grace: How Forgiveness Transcended Tragedy***, donated their royalties to Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). At a January MCC executive committee board meeting, Kraybill—on

behalf of the three authors—presented a check for \$40,000 to MCC to benefit children suffering because of poverty, war, or natural disaster.

• Using data provided by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, a new study by empty tomb inc. shows that in 2005, **Southerners gave an average of \$816.81 per household to church and religious organizations** while Northeasterners gave only \$453.84. The Midwest came in second in religious giving, at an average of \$784.16 per household, and the West came in third, at \$665.61. However, in giving to “charities and other organizations,” the South ranked last, at \$176.69 per household, while the West came in first, at \$221.75. (RNS)

• Former US President **Jimmy Carter** spearheaded the Celebration of a New Baptist Covenant, an unprecedented three-day gathering of more than 10,000 Baptists that began Jan. 30 with the aim of healing divisions within the body.



JUST FOR FUN: WHICH ONES?

NOT LIKE THE OTHERS The National Council of Churches recently published its *2008 Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches*, which tracks annual membership statistics and other church data. Seven of the following 10 churches ranked in the top 10 largest US churches; three did not. Can you pick out the three that don’t belong? Answers are below.

- Southern Baptist Convention
- Presbyterian Church (USA)
- Assemblies of God
- Church of the Brethren
- The United Methodist Church
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints
- The Catholic Church
- Episcopal Church
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- American Baptist Churches in the USA

ANSWERS: The Episcopal Church ranked 15th, with 2.15 million members. American Baptist Churches in the USA ranked 20th, with 1.37 million members. The Church of the Brethren, with about 127,000 members, did not make the rankings. The top 10 are: 1. The Catholic Church (67.5 million), 2. Southern Baptist Convention (16.3 million), 3. The United Methodist Church (10.1 million), 4. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (5.78 million), 5. The Church of God in Christ (5.5 million), 6. National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. (5 million), 7. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (4.77 million), 8. National Baptist Convention of America, Inc. (3.5 million), 9. Presbyterian Church (USA) (3.03 million), 10. Assemblies of God (2.84 million).



John Kline: A beloved man of God

Virginian led Brethren through turbulent Civil War years

The old pine floorboards in John Kline's house are bare now. The footsteps of this beloved Brethren elder have not been heard on them for 144 years. Yet memories still linger about this 19th-century missionary, herbal doctor, Annual Meeting moderator, farmer, and friend.

John Kline was born June 17, 1797, in Dauphin County, Pa., the second child and first son of John Sr. and Mary Hershey Kline. His grandparents George Jr. and Elizabeth Altaffer Klein were among the early settlers to the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia in the 1780s, buying several acres on the west side of Linville Creek near the trading post known as Broadway. John Kline Sr. moved his family to take over George Klein Jr.'s farm in 1811, with John Jr. driving the horse-drawn wagon.

Writing in "Elder John Kline: A life of pacifism ended in martyrdom" (*Virginia Cavalcade*, Autumn 1964), Klaus G. Wust comments, "He went to school very seldom while he lived in Pennsylvania, but his parents, the preacher, and family friends instructed the boy in the essentials of learning. He was

trained to read and write both in German and in English and acquired whatever arithmetic a farm boy ought to know. John Kline had a great penchant for reading; unlike most Valley Germans of that period, he not only read religious works, but eagerly consumed everything he found in print."

John Kline Jr. would marry Anna Wampler, daughter of early Brethren settlers John and Magdalene Garber Wampler, on March 18, 1818. Their home was built in 1822 on land given to him by his father. Its interior construction allowed for movable walls to be hung from the ceiling for the eight to 12 families who would come for worship. The meetinghouse worship rotated between the 1794 Yount house (now Tunker House) across the road and his younger brother Samuel Kline's 1830 house on their grandfather's farm on the west side of Linville Creek.

John and Anna Kline had only one child, a daughter, who died shortly after birth on March 15, 1819, and is buried in the family cemetery near his grandparents' graves on the original farm. With no other children, Kline would nurture a love for youth throughout his life, paying indentures for young boys to learn the farming trade and creating a school (The Cedar Grove Academy) on his farm for their education. On frequent visits to the homes of members or on missionary trips, Kline would find an opportunity to speak to youth about a life of devotion and discipleship to Jesus Christ and service to others.

In 1825, Kline gave part of his farmland to the Linville Creek congregation "for religious purposes." The congregation recognized his zeal for ministry and elected him deacon in 1827. He was chosen to be a minister in 1830. On Feb. 8, 1835, he preached his first sermon. He then embarked on his first missionary journey with Elder Daniel Miller to neighboring counties, a relationship that continued frequently with Elder Miller preaching in German and Kline following in English. Kline's creative use of real-life experiences in his sermons made him a welcomed guest in every home. Many congregations in Virginia, West Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio began from his missionary trips.

These preaching journeys impressed upon Kline the poverty of the mountain folk. Frequently he shared wheat or produce from his farm, even a few dollars from his pocket, to relieve their struggle. He would talk to them about Jesus Christ, and out of compassion for their ignorance of the outside world he offered practical advice for daily living.

It may have been such visits to rural, mountainous regions that led Kline to explore herbal medicine. His Jan. 1, 1836, diary entry records his interest in the work of Dr. Samuel Thompson

PRESERVATION EFFORTS

Efforts are currently under way to save the John Kline Homestead in Broadway, Va., from likely destruction for development. A trust has been established in hopes of purchasing approximately nine acres of the original homestead—including the 1822 house, spring house/summer kitchen, smoke house, and carriage house. For details, see www.johnkline-homestead.com. Groups wanting to tour the site en route to Annual Conference in Richmond this summer should call 540-896-5001.



DID YOU KNOW?

For 10 years the John Kline Memorial Riders have followed trails frequented by the historic preacher to share history, fellowship, and worship with churches in Virginia, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania. Organized and led by Emmert Bittinger, the riders have been hosted by more than 30 churches.



Albert Winkler / Courtesy of BHLA

of Vermont, who "is introducing a new system of medical practice which I believe to be more in accordance with the laws of life and health than any I know of. His maxim, applied to disease, is: 'Remove the cause, and the effect will cease.' "

Kline would use his missionary travels to coincide when particular roots and herbs could be harvested. Returning home, he would dry the herbs and create potions for ingestion or application to a wound to naturally restore the individual to health. His practice brought reasonably better results than harsher traditional medical practice, so he was called upon frequently to visit

applicant's taxable property. Kline helped to raise these exemption fees, paying many from his own resources. Just after this, Kline would be imprisoned with other Brethren and Mennonite leaders in the jury room of the Rockingham County courthouse on April 5, 1862, because of their opposition to the war.

Kline's diary editor Benjamin Funk makes this comment at the beginning of 1862: "At this time medicines were scarce and [also] physicians in the army. As a consequence of this the demands for Brother Kline's professional services as a physician were largely increased. The Diary for this year shows an almost incredible amount of labor performed by him in this line. . . . He had no day of rest. In connection with all this labor and responsibility, the Brotherhood looked to him for counsel and comfort on every hand. At the same time, he wrote many letters, not only to distant Brethren, but to men in civil and military place and power."

Kline's freedom of movement during the Civil War and frequent travels across battle lines raised several threats on his life. He would say in closing remarks on May 19, 1864, to Brethren gathered at the Annual Meeting in Hagerstown, Ind., "Possibly you may never see my face or hear my voice again. I am now on my way back to Virginia, not knowing the things that shall befall me there. It may be that bonds and afflictions abide me. But I feel that I have done noth-

POSSIBLY YOU MAY NEVER SEE MY FACE OR HEAR MY VOICE AGAIN. I AM NOW ON MY WAY BACK TO VIRGINIA, NOT KNOWING THE THINGS THAT SHALL BEFALL ME THERE. IT MAY BE THAT BONDS AND AFFLICTIONS ABIDE ME. . . . NONE OF THESE THINGS MOVE ME; NEITHER COUNT I MY LIFE DEAR UNTO MYSELF, SO THAT I MAY FINISH MY COURSE WITH JOY . . .

neighbors. During the Civil War, Kline was enlisted by nearby Union and Confederate camps to treat the wounded.

His faithful ministry resulted in ordination as an elder on April 13, 1848. He frequently helped in discernment of Annual Meeting decisions, especially clarifying the Brethren position on slavery in 1853. The encroachment of a War Between the States prompted Elder Kline to pen this entry to his diary on Jan. 1, 1861: "The year opens with dark and lowering clouds in our national horizon. I feel a deep interest in the peace and prosperity of our country; but in my view both are sorely threatened now. . . . Secession means war; and war means tears and ashes and blood. It means bonds and imprisonments, and perhaps even death to many in our beloved Brotherhood, who, I have the confidence to believe, will die, rather than disobey God by taking up arms." Later that spring he would be elected as Annual Meeting moderator, a post he served until the spring of 1864.

His passion for non-resistance led Kline to write to Governor Letcher of Virginia and legislators John Hopkins, John C. Woodson, and Charles Lewis, explaining the faith and disciplines of the Brethren, as well as the Mennonites. He feared a draft would force these peace people to violate or compromise their faith, so he appealed for an exemption from military service. His efforts succeeded in the Exemption Act passed March 29, 1862, for anyone who is "bona fide prevented from bearing arms, by the tenets of the church to which said applicant belongs," including a payment of \$500 plus 2 percent of the assessed value of the

ing worthy of bonds or of death; and none of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God."

After repairing a clock at a church member's house four miles west of his home, Elder John Kline was killed June 15, 1864, by a few local military irregulars unsympathetic to his cause.

Roger Sappington summarized the contributions of John Kline to the church in his epilogue of *Courageous Prophet*: "He was a good steward, who used his property and his life well. He was a good pastor, attending to the spiritual needs of others, especially to the young and the aged. He was a missionary with a passion for the unchurched. He was a diligent physician and progressive scientist. He was an articulate and ardent defender of the Brethren faith. He was a social activist for eliminating slavery, opposing war, and working to settle disputes with reason and respect. He was a courageous prophet, speaking frequently and widely to social concerns. And finally, John Kline was a dedicated Christian who used all of the personal strength and the physical prosperity which God had given him for the glory of God and his neighbor's good. When the time came for him to give his life rather than turn his back on his God, he gave his life. No man could ask more than this of a man of God!" 

Paul Roth is pastor of Linville Creek Church of the Brethren in Broadway, Va., and an avid historian.



by J. Douglas Archer

James Quinter: Gentle, persistent progressive

Respected Brethren leader championed periodicals, higher education

James Quinter was born in 1816 in Philadelphia. At that time the Brethren supported no schools or colleges and had no regular publications or publishing houses. By the time of Brother Quinter's death in 1888 this had changed dramatically—thanks in large part to his efforts.

Almost all of what we know of his early life can be traced to the *Life and Sermons of Elder James Quinter* (1891), by his daughter Mary. Raised in poverty near Phoenixville, Pa., and breadwinner for his mother and sister from the death of his father when he was 13, Quinter lacked all but the most basic formal schooling. However, what his family lacked in material resources was more than equaled by a passion for education. By 1833, at age 17, Quinter managed to qualify for a teaching position, and he appears to have been one of the first Dunkers to be employed as an teacher. While he held

several jobs over the years, education—especially higher education—remained an enduring commitment.

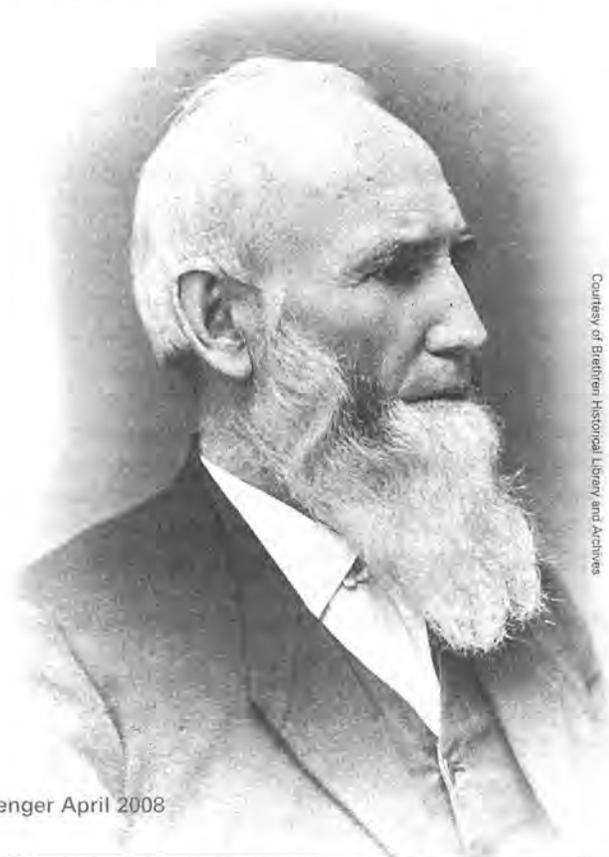
His other unwavering commitment was to the church. He was called to ministry and ordained in 1838 by the Coventry congregation. At age 22 this was rather unusual and a testimonial to his abilities, since most pastors were expected to have established themselves in their communities by occupation and marriage before being called. For the next several years he served a series of congregations and their surrounding communities, becoming known as the traveling boy preacher or simply the English preacher. He was ordained an elder in the Mill Creek (Mahoning) congregation in 1856.

In 1851, when Henry Kurtz began publishing the *Gospel Visitor*, Quinter contributed to its first issues under the name Clement. Before long he was its associate editor, adding a new theme to his life and ministry. Over the next several decades he published a series of periodicals, first in partnership with Kurtz (eventually buying his interest in the *Gospel Visitor*), then with Henry Holsinger, and finally with the Brumbaugh brothers. This string of periodicals (the *Gospel Visitor*, the *Christian Family Companion*, the *Pilgrim*, the *Primitive Christian*, and *Brethren at Work*) culminated in the *Gospel Messenger* in 1883.

Quinter was also responsible for another publishing milestone. While several hymnals had been published by Brethren in America, starting with *Das kleine Davidische Psalterspiel* (1744), Quinter was charged by Annual Conference with preparing the first authorized Brethren hymnal. Titled the *Brethren's Hymn Book* or *A Collection of Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, it appeared in 1867. It contained 818 hymns in a pocket edition (text only, no tunes) and was well and widely received, being reprinted several times.

If Kurtz was the groundbreaking pioneer of Brethren publishing, then Quinter was the homesteader who settled in for the long haul, cleared the land, and raised the first sustained crops. This is a pattern also to be found Quinter's support for education.

Not surprising given his early years, Quinter was a strong and persistent advocate of higher education. In 1861 he



Courtesy of Brethren Historical Library and Archives



THE FACT THAT SOMEONE AS CONTENTIOUS AS HOLSINGER COULD READILY AND GRACIOUSLY ACCEPT SUCH CORRECTION SAYS WORLDS ABOUT THE RESPECT IN WHICH QUINTER WAS HELD BY HOLSINGER AND BY THE CHURCH AT LARGE DURING THIS TURBULENT TIME.

helped found the New Vienna Academy in southern Ohio. Unfortunately, it suffered the same fate as many such Brethren ventures, failing in 1864. Undeterred, he was an early and strong supporter of the Brethren Normal School in Huntingdon, Pa., started in 1876, that later became Juniata College, the oldest surviving Brethren institution of higher learning. When its founder and principal, Jacob Zuck, died in 1879, Quinter was named president.

As with his efforts as a writer and publisher, playing home-steadier to Kurtz's pioneer, he once again picked up work started by someone else and carried it forward with energy, creativity, and persistence. He served as Juniata's president for nine years until his death in 1888.

During the middle decades of the 1800s, Quinter developed quite a reputation as a defender of Brethren life and teachings in print and in person. In addition to his periodicals, Quinter published several pamphlets. Most notable of the pamphlets was *Trine Immersion*, published in 1886, the culmination of a life-long fascination with the subject of baptism.

By all accounts a very effective speaker, Quinter was frequently called upon to defend his church in public debate. However, he was careful to treat his opponents fairly, an approach that was not necessarily common in the public dis-

putations of that era. Henry R. Holsinger, in his *History of the Tunkers and the Brethren Church* (1901), recounted one of those debates.

He accompanied Quinter to the event and opened the proceedings with prayer. Holsinger "asked for a special blessing for Brother Quinter, that he might be enabled to successfully defend the truth." Then, to be "impartial," Holsinger prayed "that the Lord would give him [the other fellow] light to see his error and accept the better way." Quinter's opponent got the point—and was not pleased.

On the way home after the event Holsinger reports that Quinter gently called him to task for his partisan prayers, saying that he should "be more impartial in [his] prayers on such occasions" and that "in a public discussion each party must grant the possibility of himself being in the wrong and his opponent in the right, and that in our prayers this impartiality should be recognized, if for nothing else, as a matter of courtesy and consistency." And Holsinger accepted the correction!

The fact that someone as contentious as Holsinger could readily and graciously accept such correction says worlds about the respect in which Quinter was held by Holsinger and by the Church at large during this turbulent time. While definitely progressive in many ways, Quinter's humble manner and understanding ways kept him in harmony with most of the Brotherhood; so much so that he was in great demand as a committee member at Annual Conference, serving as its assistant or writing clerk for 27 years.

Perhaps the best known incident in Quinter's life came at its very end—appropriately surrounded by the Brethren at Annual Conference. On May 19, 1888, in North Manchester, Ind., Quinter died while on his knees leading prayer at the close of Saturday afternoon worship. His final words were "We are glad to meet again." A historical marker can be found near the Peabody Retirement Community commemorating these final, most fitting words of this humble and beloved Dunker educator, publisher, and preacher. ❧

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DID YOU KNOW?

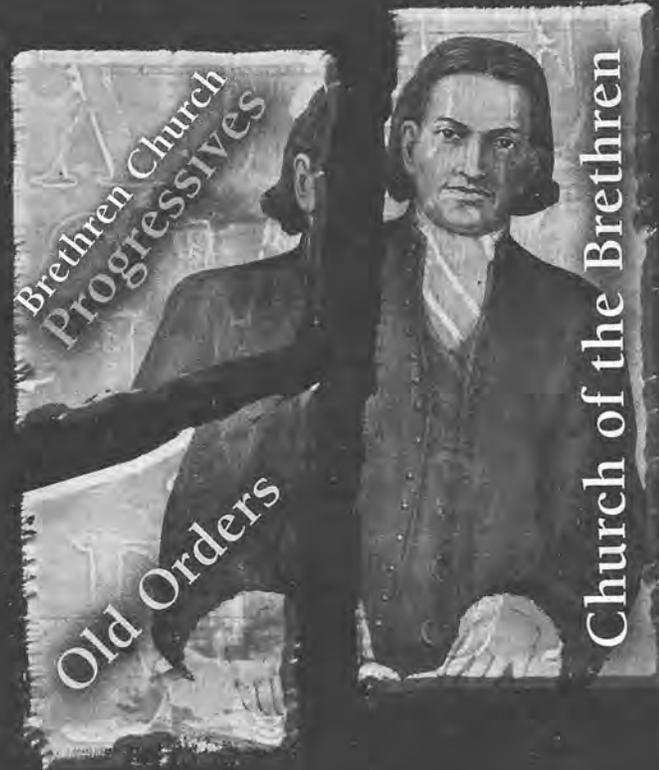
The town of Quinter, founded by Brethren in 1885, was named for James Quinter. It is in northwestern Kansas and home to Quinter Church of the Brethren. Juniata College has a Quinter House on its campus, which houses the offices for many of the English faculty. Camp Alexander Mack in Milford, Ind., features the large Quinter-Miller Auditorium. And Quinter Memorial Hospital in Bulsar, India, was named for Quinter's daughter, Mary, a missionary to India.



by Kenneth M. Shaffer Jr.

Polarization & schism among the Brethren

Three-way split "rent the Brethren fabric" in the early 1880s



A petition to the 1880 Annual Meeting called for the removal of "the fast element from among us, which is the cause of the troubles and divisions in the church."

The petition, generally known as the Miami Valley Petition, came from a group of elders in southern Ohio; those supporting the petition became known as the Old Order group. While the petition condemned the "fancy painting" of houses and barns, "fine furniture," and "costly carriages," the major opposition was to innovations such as: (1) education in high schools and colleges, which were unsafe places for simple Christians; (2) Sunday schools that usurped the duty of parents; (3) revival meetings where revival songs were sung and invitations given; (4) the salaried ministry where ministers were paid to preach the gospel; and (5) the single mode of feetwashing where one person washes and dries the feet of a neighbor and the neighbor in turn washes and dries the feet of the next person. The petition provided biblical texts to explain why each of the five innovations was not in accordance with the gospel.

The "fast element" referred to in the petition was the Progressive group. Progressive Brethren advocated the very things the Old Orders opposed. In addition, the Progressives and Old Orders disagreed on evangelism and foreign missions. The Progressives favored both, and the Old Orders opposed both. Neither group, however, was pleased with Annual Meeting. For the Progressives Annual Meeting tried

to exercise too much authority; for the Old Orders Annual Meeting did not enforce its decisions strictly enough.

The Progressives presented their positions in publications such as *The Christian Family Companion* (1865-1875) and *The Progressive Christian* (1878-1883). According to Henry Holsinger, who published both papers, the purpose of *The Christian Family Companion* was "to remove certain hindrances to the prosperity of the church.... One of these hindrances was called 'avoidance.'"

Avoidance was the practice whereby the church did not associate with those members who refused to repent when disciplined for not living according to the principles of the Brethren. Another hindrance was the lack of educated ministers. Concerning *The Progressive Christian*, Holsinger said it was begun with "the avowed purpose of advocating progressive measures and reforms."

The majority of Brethren in the early 1880s were somewhere between the Old Orders and the Progressives. Many supported some Progressive reforms but wanted change to take place slowly. Some were offended by the in-your-face nature of articles that appeared in Progressive publications. For example, in 1879 an article titled "Is the Standing Committee a Secret Society?" appeared in *The Progressive Christian*. The article listed similarities between the Annual Meeting Standing Committee and secret societies. At that time Brethren were forbidden to join secret societies, such as Free Masons and Odd Fellows, on the basis of John 18:19-24.

THE MAJORITY OF BRETHREN IN THE EARLY 1880S WERE SOMEWHERE BETWEEN THE OLD ORDERS AND THE PROGRESSIVES. MANY SUPPORTED SOME PROGRESSIVE REFORMS BUT WANTED CHANGE TO TAKE PLACE SLOWLY.

When the Miami Valley Petition came to the 1880 Annual Meeting, it was replaced by a substitute paper written by the Standing Committee. This substitute paper, which sought to be conciliatory, was approved. It acknowledged the Old Orders' concerns but did not condemn the innovations.

The Old Orders were particularly offended by the last paragraph of the substitute paper, which called for "forbearance" on the issue of feetwashing. Members were advised "to allow the same liberty of conscience for brethren that we ask for ourselves" when it came to the mode of feetwashing. The Old Orders did not feel they had been heard and so resubmitted their petition, with a few changes, to the 1881 Annual Meeting. This time the petition was rejected because it did not come through a district meeting.

At this point the Old Orders gave up. They decided Annual Meeting was never going to put a stop to the progressive ideas and practices developing in some congregations. At an August 1881 meeting, they adopted resolutions that stated why they could not remain with the larger body of Brethren. While the resolutions named the specific areas of disagreement, the overall problem, as they saw it, was that the church was "fast drifting into the popular customs of the world." In December 1881 they organized as the Old German Baptist Brethren.

The withdrawal of the Old Orders did not bring harmony to the main body of the church. The Progressives were still pressing for reforms, and they were becoming impatient. Holsinger, their acknowledged leader, tended to be a harsh critic when calling for change. When calling for an educated ministry, Holsinger described the elders as "incompetent bishops."

Eventually Holsinger became the focal point of the Progressive movement. Five districts presented charges against him at the 1881 Annual Meeting, the same meeting that refused to reconsider the Miami Valley Petition. These charges were based on articles he published that were considered contrary to Brethren beliefs and practices. As a result, a committee was sent by Annual Meeting to visit Holsinger in Berlin, Pa., to "deal with him according to his transgressions." This became known as Holsinger's trial, but no actual discussion of the transgressions took place because of disagreements about who could attend the meeting and whether the proceedings could be recorded.

The committee recommended to the 1882 Annual Meeting that Holsinger be disfellowshipped; the recommendation, after long discussion, was approved. During the following year the Progressives held meetings and wrote documents presenting their viewpoint. However no official separation took place, because there was still hope for reconciliation at the 1883 Annual Meeting. But no reconciliation was forthcoming, and in June 1883 the Progressives organized the Brethren Church.

In the aftermath of the divisions, individuals and congregations were sometimes faced with a difficult choice. With which

of the three groups would they identify? Some congregations split, and disputes arose over property. In a few instances there were lawsuits. Eventually, in the 20th century, the three groups began to cooperate on some projects. Notable is the work of the *Brethren Encyclopedia Board*, which includes representatives from all three groups plus several other Brethren groups.

In 1983, 100 years after the divisions, the board published the three-volume *Brethren Encyclopedia*, followed by a fourth volume in 2005. The board has published other books and organized three Brethren World Assemblies. The fourth assembly is scheduled for August of this year in Schwarzenau, Germany, to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the Brethren. Also notable is the cooperation between the Brethren Church and the Church of the Brethren that has occurred in foreign mission work, disaster relief, and evangelism. This year the Brethren Church and the Church of the Brethren will hold their annual conferences concurrently in Richmond, Va.

A question often raised is why did the divisions of the early 1880s occur? Obviously there were specific issues (higher education, paid ministry, mode of feetwashing, etc.), but why did these become issues among Brethren? Several answers to this question have been suggested. The answer favored by this writer is that the Brethren had to decide how to respond to the change taking place in the larger society.

In the years following the Civil War, the United States experienced remarkable economic growth and social change. The country was moving from an agricultural society to an industrial society. Three different responses to these changes developed among the Brethren. One group (the Old Orders) wanted to resist change, especially if it meant changing the traditional ways of the church. Another group (the Progressives) wanted to embrace change, especially new methods being adopted by other denominations. A third group (the Church of the Brethren of today) wanted to change slowly. At the 1880 Annual Meeting, they said of themselves: "While we are conservative, we are also progressive."

There were divisions before the early 1880s, and there were divisions after. But, as Donald Durnbaugh says: "It was not until the last half of the nineteenth century that schism completely rent the Brethren fabric. . . . Nothing approached the trauma of this three-way split of the early 1880s." 

(Information taken from: *Fruit of the Vine* by Donald F. Durnbaugh; *Holsinger's History of the Tunkers and The Brethren Church* by H. R. Holsinger; *The Brethren in Industrial America* compiled and edited by Roger E. Sappington; "Division Among the German Baptist Brethren" by Kerby Lauderdale; *The Brethren Encyclopedia*; *Brethren Life and Thought*, Summer 1979; Annual Meeting Minutes)

Kenneth M. Shaffer Jr. is director of the Brethren Historical Library and Archives in Elgin, Ill. He is a member of Highland Avenue Church of the Brethren.



by Pamela K. Brubaker

In mission in India

Work began with orphanages and expanded rapidly

The Church of the Brethren mission field in India was opened in January 1895 by Wilbur B. and Mary Emmert Stover and Bertha Ryan (Shirk). The first mission station was at Bulsar, north of Bombay (now Mumbai) in western India.

By 1897 other missionaries had arrived, and expansion began. In 1899 mission stations were started at Anklesvar and Jalalpor. Other mission stations opened at Dahanu (1902), Vali-Umalla (1904), Vada and Vyara (1905), Ahwa (1907), and Palghar (1921). The mission encompassed a vast area, more than 7,000 square miles. Protestant missions in India practiced comity, which meant they did not overlap each other's area of work. Thus Brethren were the only Protestant group in this area.

During the early years of the mission, parts of India were suffering from severe famine, leaving many children orphaned. In 1897, 50 orphans were brought to an improvised house in Bulsar. Bertha Ryan was their supervisor. Of 13 persons baptized there on April 3, 1898, seven were orphans. Wilbur B. Stover and many others assisted in bringing destitute children to mission stations. In 1899 an orphanage and missionary residence were constructed at Bulsar. By that time orphan groups had also gathered at Anklesvar and Jalalpor.

Serving human needs and spreading the gospel were goals of the mission program from the beginning. Service and training institutions were crucial to growth. Elementary schools, training schools, and medical facilities followed the orphanages. Boys and girls boarding schools and hostels were founded at several stations. The Bulsar Bible Training School was established in 1912. Hospitals were constructed at Bulsar in 1916 and Dahanu in 1925. Anklesvar saw the opening of a Vocational Training School in 1924 and a Rural Service Center in 1952. These institutions made significant contributions to education, health care, and agriculture, as did other Christian mission programs in India and elsewhere.

In the early years, this work was directed by missionaries. Many single women served on the mission field, along with married couples. Brethren church policy said that in preparation for the mission field there was "no discrimination as to the young people, whether they are brethren or whether they are sisters, or both, or whether they are in office." Men were expected to be "in the ministry"; for women "there is noth-

ing of that kind in the way." Women served as educators, evangelists, nurses, and doctors.

Bertha Ryan represented the district of India at the 1900 Annual Meeting, the first recorded woman delegate. She spoke about "India's Call Upon the Church Today" at a pre-conference missionary meeting. Her speech focused on the needs of India, especially suffering from famine, diseases, and the condition of women. She concluded with a call to members of the church in the US to support both foreign and home missions.

In 1945, the Church of the Brethren in India became an autonomous church. At that time, there were 22 congrega-



Early Brethren missionaries to India gather for a photo on the steps of an orphanage in January 1905.

tions with over 8,000 members. After India's independence in 1947, Indian church leadership developed quickly, and fewer overseas missionaries were needed. In 1970 the Church of the Brethren in India united with five other denominations to form the Church of North India. At that time, there were 20 evangelistic centers, 25 congregations, and about 18,000 people, including children, associated with the Brethren mission program.

The Church of the Brethren in the United States currently maintains ties with both the Church of North India (CNI) and the Church of the Brethren in India, established by some historic and new congregations that wish to be independent. 

Pamela K. Brubaker is a member of the Gratis Church of the Brethren in Southern Ohio, which supported Kathryn Kiracofe on the Indian mission field (1937-1973).



A route to renewal

Brethren colleges may offer models for the journey

by Theodore E. Long

In this first decade of the 21st century, the contrast between Brethren colleges and the church that gave them birth could not be more striking. Simply stated, the colleges are flourishing but the church is floundering, a trend that has multiple expressions.

While the colleges are growing, for example, the church's membership is dwindling. The colleges have strong and ample leadership, but the Church of the Brethren is suffering leadership challenges. And contrary to the sustained and focused development of the colleges, the church appears to be splintered and lacking in clear direction.

Those contrasting trajectories suggest the possibility of a new relationship between the church and its colleges. Traditionally, that relationship has centered on how and to what extent the colleges appropriate the Brethren heritage, a pattern typical of church-college issues in most denominations. The primary focus in this relationship has been the colleges' fading fidelity to the church, and colleges are perennially tested with the questions "What does it mean to be a church-related college?" or "How Brethren is the college, really?" Indeed, the literature on church-related higher education abounds with discussions of how religiously founded colleges in all denominations have become more secularized in the last century.

Perhaps a more compelling focus for college-church relations is the church itself. As former Manchester College president Parker Marden put it so succinctly, the primary question should

now be, "What does it mean for the church to have these colleges?" I believe that the church genuinely needs its colleges to turn around its fortunes and to light the way forward toward a more vital future. The colleges can be a model and resource for the renewal of the church's witness in the 21st century.

Mission driven and market smart

Brethren colleges are intentional about nurturing and advancing their Brethren heritage as a central element of their mission. They are proactive in seizing opportunities for realizing heritage principles in today's world, continuously unfolding new possibilities to renew the heritage in a changing generation. That heritage defines the distinctive identity of the colleges, which highlight historic Brethren principles throughout their educational programs.

Brethren colleges are also "market smart," which enables them to succeed in today's world. We hold to principle, but we adapt in practice to address the rapidly changing marketplace of higher education and new trends in American culture. Our effort to bring mission to market includes five interconnected efforts of particular interest to the church:

- We *recruit to grow*, aggressively marketing our mission and program to build our reputation and to secure increasing numbers of talented students.
- We *plan to sustain institutional development* by centering our work on what is most important and by developing the

critical success factors that enable us to excel in the higher education marketplace.

- *We deliver a vibrant educational experience* that is engaging and vital, and students genuinely become enchanted with our colleges because their experience is uplifting and life-transforming.

- *We innovate continually*, creating new programs, new modes of delivery, and new experiences that will keep us competitive and responsive to new student interests.

- *We welcome diversity*, seeking out students and faculty from different cultural, religious, and intellectual backgrounds to strengthen our educational program.

A collegiate strategy for the church

From my sociological perspective, the Church of the Brethren appears to be firmly mission-driven but not very market-smart. The source of that, I suspect, is a “preserve and protect” approach to its heritage that is not responsive to contemporary conditions.

To advance its mission in the world with the kind of success the colleges have enjoyed will require the church to change its approach to place less emphasis on historic practice, and to adapt to contemporary possibilities for mission rather than preserving what once was.

Historically, the Church of the Brethren was founded on resistance to the dominant culture, so what I am suggesting here may seem like a capitulation lacking integrity. But I



Manchester College

would contend that the colleges’ approach constitutes a middle ground between resistance and capitulation to culture, one that adapts mission to market to take advantage of opportunities to realize the mission in practice. In religious terms, it means advancing the sacred faith around which we gather in the secular marketplace of contemporary culture, not just preserving it as an artifact of a bygone era. This change in approach is a necessary foundation for the church to become market-smart, and it can learn a great deal from its colleges by applying approaches that have helped them flourish.

I do not want to suggest that the church has no vitality or that it is without resources for renewal. Indeed, as I have come to know the church more deeply, I am impressed by and attracted to some great

strengths, even though they are often insufficiently exploited for ministry and witness in the world. At the same time, I believe the church needs to add some new features to its repertoire of faith and practice. Let me suggest three such innovations that I believe could animate the church today:

- **Evangelize more energetically.** I’m a Lutheran, and we Lutherans have always been timid about evangelizing, but I must say we have met our match in the Church of the Brethren. Indeed, I don’t see any systematic effort at all to grow the church or even to advance the message of the church in the wider culture. Ironically, the Church of the Brethren in Africa is growing by leaps and bounds, but we in the US have not moved dramatically to turn around the precipitous decline in church membership or to contribute to refocusing our wayward culture. I believe the future vitality of the church depends on energetic recruiting to and marketing of the church and its mission, just like its colleges have done so successfully.

- **Serve the seekers and offer a vibrant spiritual experience.** Today’s religious marketplace is full of people who are seeking vibrant spirituality. They are not certain about their connection to God, and they are often not churchly—at least not traditionally so. While they are eager to live out their faith in action, they want to nourish the inner life of the spirit and to engage God in nontraditional ways. They want new worship forms and new ways to nurture the spirit—dramatic, even ecstatic, experiences that can lead them beyond what traditional religion typically offers. As regards spirituality, the Church of the Brethren is far more Anabaptist than Pietist, and it has not nurtured spiritual formation nearly to the same extent as living faith in action. In worship, drama and vibrancy are not the primary features of Brethren traditions, and where new forms are tried, they tend to be sequestered outside the primary tradition-



University of La Verne

DID YOU KNOW?

After a century and a half of opposing higher education, the Brethren began some two dozen academies and “normal schools” in the late 19th century, according to *The Brethren Encyclopedia*. By 1940 there were six colleges (plus Bethany Theological Seminary) remaining, and all continue today: Bridgewater (Va.); Elizabethtown (Pa.); Juniata (Huntingdon, Pa.), the University of La Verne (Calif.), Manchester (North Manchester, Ind.), and McPherson (Kan.). Of those, Juniata is the oldest, dating to 1876.

OUR COLLEGES THRIVE IN LARGE PART BECAUSE WE ARE THE BEARERS OF A PRECIOUS HERITAGE, ONE THAT HAS ANIMATED A DISTINCTIVE BROTHERS PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION, AND WE ARE ALL INTENTIONAL ABOUT NURTURING AND ADVANCING IT.

al forms. To renew its energy, the church must give greater vitality to the spiritual side of its heritage and bring innovative experiences to the center of its life together, joining them to its ongoing expressions of faith in action.

• **Make the church more cosmopolitan.** The Church of the Brethren is caught in something of a demographic and theological cul-de-sac that saps its vitality and innovative spirit even as it draws the church community closer together. There are very few "strangers" in the church, demographically, ecologically, culturally, or theologically, and when the church does happen onto differences in its midst, division rather than welcome is a frequent result. To renew its own energy and extend its witness, the church must take its message to non-traditional people, places, and occasions. Go where the population is exploding, not just where Brethren happen to settle. Don't just associate with "our" people but seek out those from other traditions and those with different experiences. Welcome different views and nurture dialogues about important issues of faith and life, and go into the public square to address the culture and confront its multiple diversities head-on. If the church does not do this, it will likely be doomed to irrelevance in the future.

Charting a course for renewal

There are no doubt other sensible suggestions for renewal that could be generated from a close study of the success of Brethren colleges. And the church is not without resources and experience to support such renewal. But none of these possibilities will be realized without church-wide planning to chart a focused direction for renewal. Such planning must address a number of pivotal questions about the church's future:

- What are the church's strengths and weaknesses as a religious enterprise?
- What are the opportunities for and threats to church renewal in the religious and cultural environment?
- What is the church's definition of success in mission terms?
- How can the church best position itself for success and protect against failure in today's environment?
- What strategy will be most effective to realize success?
- How will the church mobilize human, monetary, and supportive resources to do so?
- What will have to change to realize the church's ambitions, and what must be done to address resistance to change?

The report of the Review and Evaluation Committee at last year's Annual Conference at least began to raise some of the critical issues such planning will have to address, but it only



barely scratches the surface and certainly does not constitute a plan itself. Much more will be required to chart a new course, and conducting an effective planning process will itself be the first challenge of renewal for the church.

I encourage the church to draw upon the colleges' reservoir of talent and expertise, Brethren or not, to address these important and substantive issues. We will find ways for our staff to serve the church in this way. In addition, the historic role of colleges as arenas for open, civil discourse about important issues suggests a role for them as conveners of conversation and dialogue on the major issues of the church's future. Toward that end, the Brethren college and seminary presidents have agreed to convene ongoing dialogues on our campuses about the issues facing the church.

Our colleges thrive in large part because we are the bearers of a precious heritage, one that has animated a distinctive Brethren philosophy of education, and we are all intentional about nurturing and advancing it. But we also thrive because we have been able to bring that heritage alive in new and different ways for the students of today, most of them not Brethren, and thereby we may be the most effective promulgators of that heritage today.

We therefore reach out in partnership to offer our experience and expertise as a resource for the church, and we all look forward to the renewal and extension of its vitality and witness in the years ahead. ❧

Theodore E. Long is president of Elizabethtown (Pa.) College. A former sociology professor and provost at several other schools, he has served at Elizabethtown since 1996. This article was drawn from a presentation Long made at the 2007 Annual Conference in Cleveland, Ohio.



Courtesy of Brett Myers

The message in the magic

by Karen Doss Bowman

Brethren college student has a unique witness for Christ

While most magicians simply want to wow and intrigue their audiences with an entertaining show, Brett Myers takes his act a step further. The 21-year-old Church of the Brethren member weaves the good news of Jesus Christ into his illusions and magic tricks, in hopes of reaching people in need of salvation.

Since founding BAMmagic Ministries in March 2005, the Chambersburg, Pa., native performs frequently at churches, schools, and other venues to "share God's message of truth and redemption using the art of illusion." A junior communications major at Bryan College in Dayton, Tenn., Myers spent his fall semester in Minneapolis to complete an internship with award-winning Christian illusionist Toby Travis, learning how to manage the business aspects of his ministry, receiving critiques to improve his art, and performing shows in Ecuador and India.

Myers has a vision to grow his ministry into a full-time endeavor by the time he graduates from college in May 2009. "I hope to [grow the ministry] into an effective tool for outreach and evangelism in our culture," he says. "That's what I have a heartfelt passion for—to connect with the lost and present to them the Gospel in a very creative, very fresh, new way that's going to make sense to people."

Though he remembers learning his first magic trick at age 5

from his grandfather, Myers didn't begin to seriously study the art until he was about 14 years old. A friend loaned him a series of videotapes showing the secrets behind magic tricks, and he began practicing earnestly. He wasn't an immediate success, but he loved performing illusions. Within a few years he aspired to become a restaurant magician, performing for patrons as they waited to be served. He couldn't find a gig, however, so he was left wondering what to do next.

It was one of Myers' high school teachers who first suggested that he develop his art into a ministry that churches could use to reach out to their communities. Though he felt uncertain about the idea, he decided to give it a try and sent out marketing materials to more than 125 churches in his area. During the following summer of 2005, he was invited to perform in seven of those churches, including his home church, Chambersburg Church of the Brethren.

While he enjoyed performing the magic shows, Myers says he still didn't think of it as a calling—just a hobby. But his perspective changed when he joined the Fellowship of Christian Magicians (FCM), an international organization of Christian performers, which had a regional chapter that met about five miles from his college. It was during an FCM meeting in the fall of 2005, Myers says, that "God gave me a vision for how



Courtesy of Brett Myers

"HE DOES HIS ILLUSIONS IN AN AMAZING WAY THAT HE ALWAYS BRINGS BACK TO THE POINT OF CHRIST AND OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM. IT AMAZES ME HOW HE CONNECTS WITH PEOPLE AND BRINGS OUT ALL THE TRUTHS SO SIMPLY TO PEOPLE."

he might use this talent as a full outreach ministry that I could witness Christ to our culture."

Though witnessing for Christ is his primary goal, Myers opens his shows with short illusions designed to draw in the audience. Combining music, humor, and a flair for the dramatic—not to mention expertise in pulling off the illusions—Myers and his assistant, his girlfriend Katie Garrison, intrigue the audience with a good show. He spends hours perfecting his technique, rehearsing the verbal and non-verbal cues of his script.

"You have to strive for excellence in the art of magic and illusion, because if you don't earn the right to be heard and people can see that you don't know what you're doing on stage, they're not going to trust the message that you're giving them, either," he says.

After about 20 minutes, his act becomes more personal. He describes how, at age 12, he suffered from a deep depression caused by his fears of death, sickness, and the world's chaos. "My life felt like a newspaper story that was torn into so many pieces," he tells the audience, while displaying ripped pieces of newsprint in his hands.

The fear of what he couldn't control gripped him tightly, paralyzing him and isolating him from friends and loved ones, he tells them, until one night he called out to God and invited God to take control of his life. God's grace brought him through the period of darkness, he says, and now he strives to live for Christ.

"God took the broken pieces of my life and put them back together like this newspaper story," he tells the hushed crowd, as he opens up the previously torn newsprint now transformed into a whole page.

After sharing his testimony, Myers typically performs an illu-

sion to illustrate how sin separated God and humanity.

Through the illusion, he witnesses about Jesus Christ coming to earth to die for our sins so that we can be reunited with God.

The message through magic is powerful, says Manny Diaz, former pastor of the Chambersburg congregation, who has known Myers since his early teens.

"He does his illusions in an amazing way that he always brings back to the point of Christ and our relationship with him," Diaz says. "It amazes me how he connects with people and brings out all the truths so simply to people."

Connecting with international audiences presents different challenges than performing in the United States, Myers says, and flexibility was the most important lesson. He had to adapt his show in settings where the high-tech equipment he's accustomed to using wasn't available.

The language barrier was a big adjustment as well, he says. Though most Indians are fluent in English, Myers still had to tweak the one-liners, such as puns, that wouldn't make sense to people in another culture. The Indians, he quickly learned, enjoy physical comedy, so funny facial expressions and audience participation were good hooks. In Ecuador, where fewer people are fluent in English, Myers had to use a translator, so the rhythm of his performances had to be adjusted to account for the pauses and extra time that it took for his script to be translated.

Despite the differences, Myers says the international audiences were receptive. During his two-week tour in India—to nine major cities, including Bangalore, Mangalore, and Kerala—he and mentor Toby Travis worked with India Campus Crusade for Christ to build credibility for the organization within the colleges. They performed 30 shows in front of more than 23,000 people. In Ecuador, Myers and Travis worked with E3Missions (formerly Global Missions Fellowship) to help with church planting efforts in Quito, Guaranda, Esmeraldas, and Guayaquil. They were received with enthusiasm at every performance.

"I've been amazed at how magic connects with all ages and all audiences," Myers says. "Magic has an almost universal appeal. . . . I think there is some sort of longing within us for the supernatural. I think that because God has created us to have a relationship within us, there's this longing to believe in something beyond ourselves." 

Karen Doss Bowman is a freelance writer based in Bridgewater, Va. She is a member of Sunrise Church of the Brethren in Harrisonburg.



Courtesy of Brett Myers

Brett Myers, from Chambersburg Church of the Brethren, performs a Christian magic show in India. To learn more, visit www.BAMmagic.com.

Luke: *Jesus the Son of Man*

Gospel emphasizes the poor and marginalized

by Harold S. Martin

The Gospel according to Luke was written by a medical doctor named Luke. He was a traveling companion of the Apostle Paul, a non-Jewish writer, and a scholarly historian. His purpose was to

present a historically accurate account of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ, and to present Jesus as the perfect Savior who felt compassion especially for downtrodden people.

The special emphasis in the book of

Luke is on the perfect humanity of Jesus. He is presented as the Son of Man—the human, yet the perfect and divine Person. Luke shows our Lord’s kindness toward the weak, the suffering, and the outcast. Luke’s name is mentioned only three times in the New Testament. Readers will find his name in Colossians 4:14, Philemon 24, and in 2 Timothy 4:11.

Matthew traces Jesus’ genealogy back to Abraham, the father of the Jews (Matt. 1:2). Luke traces the genealogy back to Adam, the father of the human race (Luke 3:38). In Luke, Jesus is portrayed as a man with great compassion for all people. In Matthew, Jesus sends his disciples to “the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (Matt. 10:6); Luke omits that limitation.

There is much material found in Luke that is not contained in the other Gospel records. Luke refers to six miracles not named in the other Gospels—including the miraculous catch of fish (5:1-11), the raising of the widow of Nain’s son (7:11-15), the cleansing of 10 lepers (17:11-19), and the healing of the wounded ear of Malchus (22:50-51). Also, Luke names 17 parables not described in the other Gospels—including the good Samaritan (10:25-37), the rich fool and his barns (12:16-21), the builder who did not count the cost to finish his building (14:28-30), and the Pharisee and the publican (18:9-14).



The Good Samaritan Woodcut by Julius Schöner von Gredstedt

LUKE: A CLOSER LOOK

Author: Luke. **When written:** about 60 AD.

Famous stories: The birth of Jesus, the good Samaritan, the prodigal son, “counting the cost”

Well-known verses: “I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord”

(2:10b-11); “Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions” (12:15).

Other notes: Luke did not personally witness most of the events that he wrote about in the Gospel that bears his name. . . . The message of Luke was directed to a Roman official named “Theophilus.”

LUKE'S GOSPEL IS FILLED WITH SYMPATHY AND TENDER APPEALS TO OUTCASTS AND TO THE DOWNTRODDEN. LUKE TELLS ABOUT THE MAN AIDED BY THE GOOD SAMARITAN, THE MISERY OF THE PRODIGAL SON, AND THE FRIEND ASKING FOR BREAD AT MIDNIGHT.

Luke's Gospel is filled with sympathy and tender appeals to outcasts and to the downtrodden. Luke tells about the man aided by the good Samaritan, the misery of the prodigal son, and the friend asking for bread at midnight. Women and children receive a prominent place in Luke's account. Luke mentions at least 13 women not referred to in the other three Gospels—including Elizabeth, Anna, the woman with 10 silver coins, and Joanna. In Luke, the reader learns about the childhood of Jesus, the widow of Nain, the sisters Mary and Martha, and the visit of Mary to the home of Elizabeth.

Luke is often considered the most interesting Gospel to read. One never grows tired of reading about the visits of the angel in connection with the humble birth of Jesus. All enjoy con-

trasting the personalities of Mary and Martha, the two sisters who lived in the village of Bethany. Luke is more interested in people than he is in ideas. Luke speaks about the small man Zacchaeus (19:1-10), the penitent thief (23:39-43), the contrite publican (18:9-14), and the one thankful leper (17:11-19).

A general outline of the book of Luke can be given in four parts:

1. Jesus' birth, childhood, ancestry, baptism, and temptation (1:5-4:13);
2. Jesus' ministry in the region of Galilee (4:14-9:50);
3. Jesus' ministry on the way to Jerusalem, by way of Perea (9:51—19:27);
4. Jesus' arrest, death, and resurrection in Jerusalem (19:28—24:53).

The concluding words in Luke's Gospel assure the disciples of Jesus that he has indeed ascended into heaven. He blessed them and "withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven" (Luke 24:51).

Writing sometime later in the book of Acts, Luke quotes the words of the angels, when they said, "This Jesus . . . will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). It is no wonder that the disciples "returned to Jerusalem with great joy" (Luke 24:52). 

Harold S. Martin is an ordained minister in the Church of the Brethren and editor of Brethren Revival Fellowship's *BRF Witness* newsletter. He lives in Lititz, Pa.

MESSINGER'S "Journey through the Word" series will provide a brief overview of a different book (or books) of the Bible each month through December 2009. Coming in May: John, by Graydon F. Snyder.

THE CHECK IS IN THE MAIL

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Brethren join celebration of Butler Chapel anniversary

A Church of the Brethren delegation of about two dozen people were in Orangeburg, S.C., Jan. 18-20 for the 10th anniversary of the dedication of the Butler Chapel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church.

The church building was largely built by Brethren volunteers working under the direction of Brethren Disaster Ministries (formerly Emergency Response/Service Ministries). Butler Chapel's original building was one of many destroyed by arsonists in the rash of church burnings in 1995-1996. With funds from the National Council of Churches as well as other sources, and with the help of 300 volunteers, a new church building was constructed, debt-free.

The three-day celebration was marked by a vibrant mix of AME and Church of the Brethren members. The Sunday morning sermon was the only major address, but there were hundreds of "messages" seen and heard as greetings, hugs, warm embraces, tears of joy, and expressions of love. The

whole event was a huge message of common faith and purpose, as two very different yet very alike denominations merged to thank God for what has happened at Butler Chapel.

The small congregation is extending its witness in amazing ways. There are five choirs, a praise dance group of children—carefully trained in expressing worship through movement, and other events aimed at promoting dedicated discipleship. The facility also has become a center for many district events. A highlight of the event was a celebration choir that included some Brethren.

The Brethren delegation included then-acting general secretary Mary Jo Flory-Steury; General Board members Russell Betz and Terrell Lewis; Brethren Disaster Ministries staff Roy Winter, Judy Bezon, and Jane Yount; Brethren Disaster Ministries staff volunteers Glenn and Helen Kinsel, who have kept in contact with Butler Chapel for the past 10 years; several project directors who guided the

building construction—John and Marianna Baker, Stanley Barkdoll, and Earl Dohner; former Brethren Volunteer Service worker Torin Eikler; a number of volunteers who were involved in the rebuilding; and other interested Brethren supporters.—Glenn Kinsel



Mary Jo Flory-Steury receives a plaque from the congregation, on behalf of the Church of the Brethren General Board.



About two dozen members of the Church of the Brethren attended the 10th anniversary celebration of the rebuilding of Butler Chapel AME Church. After it was burned down by an arsonist, the church was rebuilt largely by Brethren volunteers working through the Brethren Disaster Ministries program.

Personnel moves

• **Jillian Baker** left Feb. 4 on a two-year assignment in Central America, working for the Global Mission Partnerships of the General Board through Brethren Volunteer Service. She will serve as community development staff for the Foundation for Self Sufficiency in El Salvador, organizing sustainable development projects in the areas of reforestation, micro-enterprise, and health. Her first task will be to help the foundation conduct a com-

munity needs and skills survey to study the potential for micro-enterprise projects. Baker is from Woodbridge, Va., and holds a bachelor's degree in sociology and Hispanic studies from the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Va.

• **Marie Rhoades** joined the staff of On Earth Peace as peace education coordinator in February. Rhoades has previous ministry experience with youth in congregational, district, and camp settings. At On Earth Peace, she will provide educational materials, interactive

workshops, peace retreats, and other opportunities for youth and adults to grow in peacemaking leadership. Rhoades has studied philosophy and religion at McPherson (Kan.) College and holds a master of divinity degree from Lancaster (Pa.) Theological Seminary. She is a member of Lancaster Church of the Brethren and has joined the Place Apart community, a Brethren related intentional community in Putney, Vt., where she will be based. She can be reached at marie.oepa@gmail.com or 717-917-9392.



Pair of pastors top list of 2008 ballot candidates

Shawn Flory Replogle, pastor of McPherson (Kan.) Church of the Brethren, and Beth Sollenberger-Morphew, pastor of Elkhart (Ind.) Valley Church of the Brethren, are the candidates for moderator-elect on the ballot that has been announced for the 2008 Church of the Brethren Annual Conference. The Nominating Committee of Standing Committee—a committee of representatives of Church of the Brethren districts—developed a list of candidates, and Standing Committee then voted to create the ballot that will be presented to delegates. Nominees for other positions are:

Annual Conference Program and Arrangements Committee: Linda Fry of Mansfield, Ohio; Diane (Newcomer) Mason of Moulton, Iowa.

Pastoral Compensation and Benefits Advisory Committee: Shirley Bowman Jamison of

Calloway, Va.; Linda Sanders of Oakland, Md.

Committee on Interchurch Relations: Paul W. Roth of Broadway, Va.; Melissa Troyer of Middlebury, Ind.

Association of Brethren Caregivers board: Bernard A. Fuska of Timberville, Va.; John D. Kinsel of Beavercreek, Ohio; Tammy Kiser of Dayton, Va.; Christopher J. Whitacre of McPherson, Kan.

Bethany Theological Seminary Trustee, representing clergy: Nathan D. Polzin of Saginaw, Mich.; Karen Walters of Tempe, Ariz.; **representing laity:** Founa Inola Augustin of Miami, Fla.; Raymond M. Donadio Jr. of Greenville, Ohio.

Brethren Benefit Trust board: John A. Braun of Wenatchee, Wash.; Jack H. Grim of East Berlin, Pa.

On Earth Peace board: Jordan Blevins of Gaithersburg, Md.; Vickie Whitacre Samland of Edgewater, Colo.



Shawn Flory Replogle



Beth Sollenberger-Morphew

Council recommends that Conference remain 'Annual'

Denominational envisioning, the frequency of Annual Conference, polity questions, financial concerns, and business items for the 2008 Annual Conference were all on the agenda of the Annual Conference Council as it met Nov. 27-30 in New Windsor, Md.

The meeting, chaired by immediate past Annual Conference moderator Belita Mitchell, also included 2008 moderator Jim Beckwith and moderator-elect David Shumate, Joan Daggett, Jim Myer, Fred Swartz, and Lerry Fogle. Don Kraybill of the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies at Elizabethtown (Pa.) College, led a day and a half retreat devoted to discussions of denominational envisioning and the future of Annual Conference.

A portion of the retreat addressed whether the denominational Conference should continue to be held yearly. The council examined 10 scenarios ranging from alternating a delegates-only Conference and a full Conference, to holding Conference every three years. The council recognized economic concerns and diminishing attendance are driving the question, and that there are many benefits to holding a biennial Conference. The council looked at other factors as well, including historical, sociological, and spiritual values to the denomination of an annual meeting. The discussion pointed out the effect of increased pulls in our culture away from opportunities to gather face-to-face.

The council will pass on to the Program and Arrangements Committee its sense that an annual Conference is preferable, with a biennial Conference as a second choice. There was unanimous agreement that the Conference needs to be "re-energized and revitalized," and the council included in its communication several ideas for making that happen.

The council received a positive financial report from the 2007 Conference, enabling the Annual Conference Fund to make progress in reducing its deficit; adopted a 2008 budget of nearly \$550,000 with anticipated income of \$585,000; celebrated completion of the denominational polity manual update; and conducted a five-year performance review for Annual Conference executive director Lerry Fogle.

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 3 Ministry of Reconciliation workshop, "Keeping a Cool Head in a Hot Meeting," New Windsor (Md.) Conference Center

April 4-5 Children's Disaster Services Training Workshop, Glenville, Pa.

April 4-6 Mission Alive 2008, Bridgewater (Va.) Church of the Brethren; Regional Youth Conference, McPherson (Kan.) College; Roundtable Regional Youth Conference, Bridgewater (Va.) College

April 12 Deacon Ministry Training Event, Spurgeon Manor, Dallas Center, Iowa

April 12 "Exploring Consensus Decision-Making" workshop (On Earth Peace), Tipp City, Ohio

April 12-13 Children's Disaster Services Training Workshop, La Verne, Calif.

April 15 Church of the Brethren Credit Union board meeting, Elgin, Ill.

April 18-19 On Earth Peace board meeting, New Windsor, Md.

April 19 Deacon Ministry Training Event, Modesto (Calif.) Church of the Brethren

April 19-20 Brethren Benefit Trust board meeting, Elgin, Ill.

April 21-May 2 Brethren Volunteer Service Older Adult Unit orientation, New Windsor, Md.



A CONTINUING TESTIMONY



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missionary to Nigeria
and first principal of
Kulp Bible College

Mbode Ndirmbita
M.Div. 2004
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'Resolution Urging Forbearance' is approved by three agencies

"A Resolution Urging Forbearance" has been approved by the boards of the Association of Brethren Caregivers (ABC)—which initiated the resolution—the General Board, and On Earth Peace. ABC asked for support of the resolution from the other agencies at meetings last fall.

The ABC board shared the paper as "a great concern" and hoped to "take a strong statement to the body of Annual Conference," according to comments by ABC executive director Kathy Reid at the October 2007 meeting of the General Board. She described the resolution as pointing to the importance of forbearance in the church, and calling for recognition of the time it takes for the church to work through difficult issues.

After the resolution met with a mixed reaction from the General Board, the group voted to receive the document for the purpose of collaboration. A joint committee of members from the boards of the three agencies was then formed to continue work on refinement of the wording. Russell Betz and Tim Harvey from the General Board met with Eddie Edmonds and John Katonah of the ABC board and Bev Weaver of the On Earth Peace board. The General Board and the On Earth Peace board adopted the revised resolution in January. The document will come to the 2008 Annual Conference in July.

The text of the short resolution begins, "We find ourselves in a world where people are driven apart by deep differences. These divisions seep into the church, pitting us against one another in action and language. Yet God has entrusted us with a ministry of reconciliation."

Citing 2 Corinthians 5:17-19 and Matthew 5:17, and giving a brief review of scriptural references to forbearance, the paper also quotes Annual Conference statements and offers an overview of Brethren tradition and history with regard to the practice of forbearance in the church.

"In the ministry of reconciliation we are called to love and care for each other before we are called to correct one another. Before we are conservative, liberal, evangelical, progressive, or any one of the many labels we put on one another, we are children of God and brothers and sisters in the church," the document continues.

In closing it offers five specific resolutions, including "In all circumstances, we will embrace our commitment to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ as equally important to our other theological beliefs (1 Corinthians 13:1-8; Ephesians 4:32)." The full text of the resolution is available at www.brethren.org/genbd/GBResolutions/index.html.

a quiet place to get things done

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For more information, call, write or email
Cori Hahn
Conference Coordinator
PO Box 188
New Windsor, MD 21776
(410) 635-8700
(800) 766-1553
chahn_gb@brethren.org
www.brethren.org/genbd/nwcc

ONCAMPUS

Bridgewater College (*Bridgewater, Va.*)

Bridgewater hosted a debate on illegal immigration Feb. 21 as part of the Harold W. Row Symposium. Dan Stein, president of the Washington-based Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), and Enrique Morones, founder of Border Angels, debated how the United States should deal with the millions of illegal immigrants living and working in the country.

Elizabethtown College (*Elizabethtown, Pa.*)

Bethany Theological Seminary professor Russell Haitch discussed how the Brethren love feast can speak to the lives of today's young people during a March 13 presentation at the college's Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies. . . . Religious studies professor Michael Long has edited a collection of essays that discuss evangelist Billy Graham's impact on mainline Christianity and on American civil religion.

Juniata College (*Huntingdon, Pa.*)

Juniata has agreed to increase the amount of wind-generated energy it purchases to 30 percent of the college's total energy usage, increasing to 75 percent by 2012 by purchasing Renewable Energy Credits from Renewable Choice Energy. The college says the move will reduce carbon dioxide emissions by an amount equivalent to planting about 244,710 trees.

University of La Verne (*La Verne, Calif.*)

Long-time US political leader and former presidential candidate George McGovern visited La Verne March 4-6 to discuss ideas for ending world hunger. McGovern, the first United Nations global ambassador for hunger issues, took part in a university symposium on world hunger and genocide and gave a lecture on "Ending Hunger in Our Time" during his visit.

Manchester College (*North Manchester, Ind.*)

The annual Career Services survey found that within six months of the May 2007 commencement, 97.8 percent of graduates had found jobs, were continuing their studies, or were full-time volunteers. . . . Human rights activist John Prendergast on Feb. 18 delivered a convocation address and participated in a panel discussion and dialogue about genocide and mass atrocities.

McPherson College (*McPherson, Kan.*)

McPherson kicked off its 2008 Local Business Campaign with a luncheon on Feb. 7. In the campaign, which ran through Feb. 29, local businesses received a call from a community volunteer or one of McPherson's Project Connect student callers. Businesses were asked to support this year's annual scholarship fund drive. The gifts provide scholarship money to more than 95 percent of McPherson students.

Four chosen to serve on youth peace team

Samantha Carwile, Gabriel Dodd, Melisa Grandison, and John-Michael Pickens will make up this year's Church of the Brethren Youth Peace Travel Team, doing peace programs at a variety of camps and conferences this summer.

Carwile, a current student at Manchester College (North Manchester, Ind.) majoring in peace studies and sociology, is a member of Anderson (Ind.) Church of the Brethren. Dodd, a student at Bridgewater (Va.) College majoring in communications and peace studies, is a member of Bethany Church of the Brethren in Farmington, Del. Grandison, a student at McPherson (Kan.) College studying elementary education and Spanish, is a member of Quinter (Kan.) Church of the Brethren. And Pickens, a Messiah College (Grantham, Pa.) student currently studying in Thailand, is a member of Mechanicsburg (Pa.) Church of the Brethren.

The team will travel to camps around the denomination, as well as to Annual Conference in Richmond, Va., and National Young Adult Conference in Estes Park, Colo. The Youth Peace Travel Team is an annual program sponsored by Outdoor Ministries Association, On Earth Peace, and the Church of the Brethren General Board.

Bits and pieces:

• **Online registration** began on www.brethren.org in January for summer youth and young adult workcamps sponsored by the Church of the Brethren General Board. As of March 1, about 650 participants had registered. Registration is also under way for National Young Adult Conference, to be held Aug. 11-15 in Estes Park, Colo.

• A new **environmental health resource** for youth leaders and parents is available from the National Council of Churches Eco-Justice Program. Titled "Mindful Living: Human Health, Pollution, and Toxics," it teaches how to maintain the sanctity of our bodily temples and ensure the health of God's Earth. Copies can be downloaded at www.ncccecojustice.org/mindful_living.html.

• Members of the **Sugar Valley Church of the Brethren** (Loganton, Pa.) youth class recently raised \$2,000 to purchase eight water buffalo through Heifer International.



Walt Wiltschak

College ministry: Campus ministers and chaplains from five of the six Church of the Brethren colleges and universities met at the Church of the Brethren General Offices in Elgin, Ill., this winter. Pictured are, front row from left, Dave Witkovsky, Juniata College (Huntingdon, Pa.); Mary Jo Flory-Steury, General Board executive director of Ministry; Chris Douglas, General Board director of Youth/Young Adult Ministry; second row, Tom Hurst, McPherson (Kan.) College; Robbie Miller, Bridgewater (Va.) College; Debbie Roberts, University of La Verne (Calif.); Steve Crain, Manchester College (North Manchester, Ind.). Not pictured is Tracy Wenger Sadd of Elizabethtown (Pa.) College.



'Three Cups of Tea'

One man's mission for peace

A free-spirited mountain climber, Greg Mortenson, was in Pakistan in the early 1990s to climb K-2—the second highest peak in the world and, some would say, the most challenging.

As he was ready to make the last stage of his climb, he exhausted himself rescuing fellow climbers and did not have energy left to make his own attempt on the top. Worn out and disoriented, he lost his way and wandered into the high-mountain Muslim village of Korphe. The villagers greeted him warmly, took him in, fed him, and gave him a place to rest.



JAMES H. LEHMAN

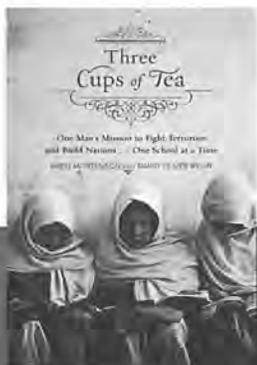
Mortenson saw that Korphe had no schoolhouse; children were studying in the open air on a cold rock shelf. To express his thanks, he decided to help the villagers build a school, and he returned to the United States to raise money. But he knew nothing about fund-raising. He had no computer skills. In his first effort he mailed more than 500 hand-typed letters and netted one \$100 check.

Mortenson eventually learned how to make contacts and use the computer and painstakingly raised more than \$12,000.

THIS IS HOW MORTENSON CAME INTO THE LIVES OF HIS PAKISTANI FRIENDS. HE BROUGHT NO GOVERNMENT OR CORPORATE POWER. HE BROUGHT ONLY HIMSELF, HIS INTEREST, AND HIS COMPASSION. HE RELEASED THE STRENGTH AND RESOURCES IN THE PEOPLE THEMSELVES.

He put the cash in his pocket and flew back to Pakistan. Though naïve and inexperienced, Mortenson was a good judge of people. He found Pakistanis who understood construction, and with their help he bought materials to build the school and moved them by truck to Skardu, the town closest to Korphe.

As he readied the supplies to be carried to Korphe, the village chief told him they would first have to erect a bridge across the river to the village. So Mortenson stored the materials in Skardu, went back to the States, and raised money to build a stone bridge. The men of Korphe quarried the rock and did the bridge work. Finally they



WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

"While critics agree that *Three Cups of Tea* should be read for its inspirational value rather than for its literary merit, the book's central theme, derived from a Baltistan proverb, rings loud and clear." —*Bookmarks* magazine

"Captivating and suspenseful, with engrossing accounts of both hostilities and unlikely friendships, this book will win many readers' hearts." —*Publishers Weekly*

carried the materials to Korphe on their shoulders and built the school—all this without help from the Pakistani or US governments or other organizations.

Mortenson thought his work was finished. He had expressed his appreciation; he could go back to his mountain-climbing life. But he had fallen in love with the mountain people of northern Pakistan, and they had taken him as one of their own. Other villages heard of this American who came as a friend, and they wanted schools in their villages, too. So Mortenson went back to the States to raise more money. This book is the story of how this man, without skills for publicity or fund-raising and with unorthodox methods, created just enough organization to enable

the isolated Muslim people of northern Pakistan to build more than 40 schools.

In *Philippians* we read that Christ emptied himself and was born in human likeness. The idea is that God entered into human life to live with us, know our ways, love us, and empower us. This is how

Mortenson came into the lives of his Pakistani friends. He brought no government or corporate power. He brought only himself, his interest, and his compassion. He released the strength and resources in the people themselves. After 9-11 Mortenson was one of the few Americans the Muslim people in that part of Asia trusted and listened to.

In Korphe when you drink the first cup of tea, you are still a stranger. Over the second cup you become a friend. With the third cup you have joined the family. In the villages of Pakistan it has been so for Greg Mortenson. May it be so for all of us across this troubled globe. ❧

James H. Lehman is an author and owner of Brotherstone Publishers. He is a member of Highland Avenue Church of the Brethren in Elgin, Ill.

ABOUT THE BOOK

Title: *Three Cups of Tea*. **Authors:** Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin.

Publisher: Viking (2006, hardback) / Penguin Books (2007, paperback). **Pages:** 349.

Cost: Lists at \$15 (paperback) or \$25.95 (hardback). **To order:** Call Brethren Press at 800-441-3712.

Articles aided class study

What a perfect and timely issue (January 2008) for the opening session of our 8-week study "To discover how 18th-century history and the events surrounding the foundation of the church impacted the beliefs and traditions of later Brethren."

At Fairview Church (Iowa) we used Roger Schrock's article, "Preparation Before Celebration," to set the stage for questions and discussion about our Brethren heritage and beliefs. Roger's admonition to "focus on how God has been faithful in the past (and) spur us to discover what God wants us to be and do in the future" struck a chord with the participants in our Sunday evening group.

As we focus on questions raised by participants to direct our study, the teacher (me) will find the MESSENGER as one of the valuable resources to address the questions and issues raised as the study progresses. We also appreciated the articles on Peter Becker and Alexander Mack, as well as other information. The MESSENGER is a welcome "visitor" to our home to keep us in touch with Brethren. Thank you so much for the January issue and Roger's article.

Marilyn J. Koehler
Udell, Iowa

Good pastors are hard to find

It was interesting to read Carl Bowman's comments (February 2008) on the different facts that a survey reveals. I agree that it is necessary to take surveys, for they provide useful information.

The strength of any survey rests in the manner in which questions are asked and the truthfulness of the responder. One of Carl's statements dwells on the "cultural decline of the Old Church" as compared to the present manner of worship (my paraphrase). What I think I read in that article is that there appears to be a move towards liberal theology and that style of worship.

Many conservatives have made us aware of that shift, over the years, and have tried to call us back to a solid theology. In the past 50 years church leaders have moved us from a firm foundation, within scripture itself, to the acceptance of "man's wisdom" as the way to live life.

One lesson of Carl's survey is that "many Brethren churches have pastors that are trained outside of our tradition, therefore

 **Pontius' Puddle**



National Older Adult Conference



September 1 – 5, 2008

Lake Junaluska (N.C.) Assembly

In 1958, youth gathered at Lake Junaluska for the second National Youth Conference. This September, many of those "youth"—now 50 years older—will once again "Come to the Water" for a special time of reconnecting.

Whether or not you attended NYC in 1958, come to NOAC in 2008 to renew old friendships and form some new ones.

NOAC registration materials available at www.brethren-caregivers.org or call ABC (800) 323-8039.



NYC 1958

Lake Junaluska

"Man, there's always a line for ice cream!"



"The lake brings out the blue in your eyes."

Photos from NYC 1958 are displayed with winning captions from the ABC Photo Caption contest. You can see more photos at www.brethren-caregivers.org.

POSITION OPENING

Church of the Brethren General Board

COORDINATOR OF ONLINE
GIFT INVITATION

Full-time position reportable to the Director of Stewardship and Donor Development

Location: Elgin, IL

Starting date: May 1, 2008 or as negotiated. *Position description and application form available on request.*

Responsibilities:

- Promote and secure on-line gifts that will support ministries of the General Board
- Work with multiple areas to develop and follow a comprehensive plan for e-community building and on-line giving.
- Work with outside contractor(s) for e-mail communication systems, site design, and/or on-line giving.
- Work with Coordinator of Stewardship Formation and Education on printed and electronic media messages.
- Develop and maintain the General Board Stewardship and Donor Development website and related pages, web blogs, and other web-based donor communication and gift invitation activities.

Qualifications:

- Public Relations or customer service experience
- Computer skills
- Familiarity with computer-based communications
- Commitment to denomination and ecumenical objectives
- Membership in a Church of the Brethren congregation preferred
- Positive, affirming collaborative style of leadership

Education Experience:

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent work experience

Start Date: May 1, 2008

Qualified candidates are invited to contact:

Office of Human Resources
Church of the Brethren General Board
1451 Dundee Avenue
Elgin, IL 60120-1694

Phone: 1-800-323-8039, ext 258 E-mail: kkrog_gb@brethren.org

the fundamentals of the Brethren are not taught anymore." I believe that to be true. What the survey does not reveal is why congregations seek non-Brethren pastors. Many believe that Brethren pastors are no longer being trained to treat scripture as the holy truth. If a church wants to remain tied to the conservative opinions of Christ, it is necessary to go outside of our denomination to find a like-minded pastor.

I believe that this denomination is in a struggle to survive. Today, our leaders are moving us to a conclusion: Are

we going to survive as a scriptural church, or will we emerge as a denomination that worships human wisdom?

In my heart I think Carl knows that it is difficult to find a modern Brethren pastor who has been taught that the Bible is God's infallible word, spoken from his own voice—I would love to be proved wrong! We seek outside pastors because they have not given up on the integrity of God's words. Carl, I would love to see a survey done on this issue.

Jerry Waterman
Marshalltown, Iowa

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COCLA Cooperative member sorting coffee, Quillabamba, Peru

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tel 774.776.7366 www.equalexchange.coop/how-to-order

Sow some new seeds

There is much to lament and little to rejoice in for the Brethren with the survey results of the Church Member Profile (MESSENGER, February 2008) done by Carl Bowman. It brings to mind the old saying: "If you keep doing what you're doing, you'll keep getting what you've got."

Or to paraphrase 2 Corinthians 9:6, 10: "If you don't like the harvest you're getting, sow different seeds."

Unless Brethren become more intentional and introspective, they will keep getting what they have been getting—a declining membership and influence on the world—and what doesn't seem to work. What is needed is not another conference or resolution or Annual Conference query, just some hard questioning, difficult choices, and the will to turn things around.

Ron Keener
Mesa, Ariz.

Set example via accessibility

I am writing on behalf of the Disabilities Ministry with the Association of Brethren Caregivers. We appreciate the efforts that are being made to move forward with the 2006

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MOSCOW AND SIBERIA (May 24-June 4)

ISRAEL/PALESTINE WITH AMBS (May 25-June 4)

MENNONITE GREAT TREK ALONG THE SILK ROAD
(May 25-June 9)

ALASKA CRUISE TOUR (June 4-16)

ENGLAND, SCOTLAND AND WALES (June 25-July 7)

EUROPEAN HERITAGE (July 7-20)

EXPLORING SWISS-GERMAN FAMILY ROOTS
IN EUROPE (August 25-September 7)

MENNONITE STORY IN POLAND WITH PETER KLASSEN
(September 16-24)

CHINA AND A YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE (October 8-21)

TM ALUMNI MYSTERY TOUR (October 15-23)

FOLLOWING THE STEPS OF MOSES (November 2-14)

2009 TOURS

CHURCHES AND SAFARIS IN KENYA AND TANZANIA
(February 9-20)

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Annual Conference resolution on accessibility, making all churches, camps, buildings, and conferences fully accessible to all. As we prepare for our 2008 Annual Conference, it is time to plan so that all in attendance can fully participate in this anniversary celebration.

At the 2007 Annual Conference, I spent most of my time at the ABC booth and the display floor. As a result I had the opportunity to assist several people in need of wheelchairs or assistance navigating the entry, registration hallway,

and the exhibit areas. These deal with physical space and distance, but accessibility is so much more. It includes hearing, vision, chemical sensitivities, special diets, needs specific to certain illnesses or conditions, and perhaps most importantly our attitudes about others' needs.

The Disabilities Ministry asks that we all join together to ensure that all, of varying abilities, are able to participate in every aspect of our 2008 Annual Conference. The Disabilities Ministry is committed to opening doors and build-

ing bridges in the Church of the Brethren and beyond, so that all may worship, serve, be served, learn, and grow in the presence of God as a valued member of our Christian community.

As we go to Richmond to celebrate this 300th anniversary, what a gift and example we can set as we ensure that all present may participate in this wonderful celebration. What a witness that we are all part of God's covenant.

Heddie Sumner
Midland, Mich.

Please send information to be included in *Turning Points* to Jean Clements, 1451 Dundee Ave, Elgin, IL 60120; 800-323-8039 ext. 206; jclements_gb@brethren.org. Information must be complete in order to be published. Information older than one year cannot be published.

New Members

Bassett, Va.: Kimberly Stout, Jacob Hollandsworth
Copper Hill, Va.: Agee Bell, Royce Saunders, Joshua Blumhagen, Alexander DeHart, Misty Kaye Flinchum, Mark Wayne Flinchum, Brandon Wayne Gearhart, Wyatt Andrew Gearhart, Garrett Wayne Whitlock, Joshua Callaway, Vicky Dillard Turman, Richard Lee Turman, Amber Nicole Turman
Geiger, Friedens, Pa.: Ashley Bowser, Michael Borosky, Charles Hauger, Patricia Hauger, Tanner Hauger, Gary Hiler, Lisa Hiler, Roger McCoy, Shelby McCoy
Good Shepherd, Silver Spring, Md.: Tosh Morgan
Green Hill, Salem, Va.: Ashley Tanner, Draper Tanner, Lindsey Tanner, Shawn Tanner, Ryan Armitage, Cameron Janney, Matthew Sparks, Evan Sparks, Damon Sparks, Sarah Sparks, Brian Simmons, Shanna Simmons, Dana Garman, Terry Garman, Ryan Canada, Allison Crotts, Becky Radford, Gary Smith, Lynette Smith, Justin Landis, Jarrod Roberts
Holidaysburg, Pa.: Mark Leberfinger, Kate Palladini, Liz Socie, Allen Dunlap
Hollins Road, Roanoke, Va.: Robert Brown, Gabriel Shrader, Mike Doughty, Lillian Doughty, Kevin Lyle
Locust Grove, New Castle, Ind.: Blaine Craig, Debbie Craig
Maple Grove, Lexington, N.C.: Steven Applebee, Kathy Applebee
Maranatha Multicultural Fellowship, Lancaster, Pa.: Emely D'Oleo, Carolina

Rodriguez, Luis Rodriguez, Jesus Mateo, Sandra Lopez, Maria Ramirez
McPherson, Kan.: Allan Ayella, Julia Ayella, Robert Dell, Emilie Dell, Gerald Holman, Eloise Holman
Miami, First, Miami, Fla.: Pierre-Isaac Mongerard, Shelby Vrigneau
Middle Creek, Lititz, Pa.: Joey Thompson, Kevin Brubaker, Sheila Bollinger, Anna Brubaker, Bryant Myer, Briana Sorensen, Morgan Wagner, Kirsten Myer, Brittany Garman, Kirstie Swiney, Amanda Black, Kristin Saylor, Zachary Bomberger, Kevin Wagner, Krista Wagner, Austin Stauffer, Dallas Stauffer, Marcus Stauffer
New Enterprise, Pa.: Brian McConnell, Noelle McConnell
Rocky Mount, Va.: Emily Collins, Samantha Johnson
Sunnyside, New Creek, W.Va.: Debbie Fleming, Sharon Rinker, Earl Rinker, Gabrielle Short, Marsha Short, Randy Shoemaker, Karen Shoemaker, Amber Dean, Patricia Liller, Nancy Johnson, Larry Lower, Rachael Long, Darlene Helmick, Becky Ravenscroft
Union Center, Nappanee, Ind.: Duane Grady, Bev Weaver, Amy Smoot, Ryan McBride, Rosalie McBride
Zion Hill, Columbiana, Ohio: Bob Kissinger, Joyce Kissinger, Amanda Kissinger, Ben Kissinger, Mike Hileman, Stacy Hileman, Jordon Vignon, Sydni Bowker, Karen Kidd, Richard Weimer, Barbara Weimer, Emma Atwood

Anniversaries

Booth, Leon and Brenda, Roanoke, Va., 50
Clem, Dale and Jo Ann, Nappanee, Ind., 55
Diehl, Robert and Charlotte, Uniontown, Pa., 60
Earnhart, Jim and Mary Jane, Albion, Ind., 55
Erb, Chet and Meredith, Roaring Spring, Pa., 60
Frazer, Willard and Betty, Uniontown, Pa., 55
Fulesdy, Charles and Alice, Alexandria, Va., 60
Gibson, Desmond and Lois Marie, Lincoln, Neb., 60
Heisey, Paul and Dorothy, Schaefferstown, Pa., 60
Huffman, Earson and Lois, Dale, Va., 75
Leach, Clair and Dorothy, New Enterprise, Pa., 60
Moon, Walter and Evaline, Friedens, Pa., 70
Rainey, Horace and Elizabeth, Portland, Ore., 70
Ratliff, Ronald and Edna, Roanoke, Va., 50
Shively, Charles and Lois, Albion, Ind., 60
Thompson, C. A. and Margaret, Independence, Mo., 65

Deaths

Arnold, Emolah, 81, New Oxford, Pa., Nov. 6
Atwood, Emma, 84, Poland, Ohio, Jan. 5
Bardell, Nevin S., Jr., 85, Millerstown, Pa., Jan. 7
Barnes, James, Sr., 79, Bassett, Va., April 10, 2007
Baucher, Robert, 81, Modesto, Calif., Jan. 25
Bowers, Marian E., 83, Lancaster, Pa., Jan. 6
Carpenter, Richard, 68, Brightwood, Va., Dec. 16
Clark, George, 75, New Enterprise, Pa., Jan. 26
Darkwood, Monna, 73, Goshen, Ind., April 24, 2007
Dodson, Christine, 82, Bassett, Va., March 3, 2007
Fralin, Cassie, 93, Bent Mountain, Va., Nov. 8
Gay, Charles, 67, Roanoke, Va., Feb. 18, 2007
Goering, Oswald H., 84, McPherson, Kan., Feb. 1
Gortner, Harland, 86, West Salem, Ohio, Nov. 21
Hall, Arthur, 71, Fort Wayne, Ind., Jan. 2
Harrell, Lois, 85, Elkhart, Ind., June 23
Hazen, Marjorie, 93, Columbia City, Ind., Nov. 10
Hentzi, Helen, 91, Warsaw, Mo., Jan. 27
Hoffer, Barry, 54, Elizabethtown, Pa., Jan. 14

Ikenberry, Marcia, 86, Bridgewater, Va., Sept. 23
Jarboe, Russell E., 85, Everett, Wash., Feb. 4
Jarrett, Janice Lee, 65, Bassett, Va., Nov. 26
Johnson, Wayne, 82, Ashland, Ohio, Nov. 30
Layman, Gregory, 42, Tipp City, Ohio, Dec. 31
Leach, Paul, 80, Kensington, Md., Jan. 25
McKee, David L., 61, Brush Prairie, Wash., Dec. 2
Meekins, Evelyn Brinson, 76, New Bern, N.C., Sept. 10
Metsker, Bettie, 88, Lawrence, Kan., Dec. 16
Nichols, Irene Seese, 90, Modesto, Calif., Jan. 16
Ore, Estelle, 86, Bassett, Va., July 15
Pippenger, Irene, 96, Wakarusa, Ind., Sept. 15
Pittman, Harry, Jr., 88, Columbiana, Ohio, April 27, 2007
Pritchett, John A., Jr., 82, Vilas, N.C., Jan. 16
Richardson, Laura, 94, Dexter, Mo., Jan. 24
Schreiner, Hazel Kline, 93, Alexandria, Va., Sept. 9
Sensenig, Theda G., 89, Lititz, Pa., Oct. 2
Smith, Russel I., 92, Eugene, Ore., Jan. 14
Sohn, Nona S., 85, Severna Park, Md., Jan. 4
Talbert, Byrd, 79, Hopewell, Va., Jan. 8
Thompson, Earl, 93, Covina, Calif., Dec. 20
Vance, Neva, 86, Goshen, Ind., Jan. 20
Ward, Phillip, 84, LaPorte City, Iowa, Dec. 22
Wenger, Erna K., 78, Myerstown, Pa., Jan. 13
Whitehead, Wilbur, 87, Ashland, Ohio, Nov. 30
Wicand, Cassel, 94, Goshen, Ind., Jan. 8
Williams, Dorman L., 70, Fairmont, W.Va., Jan. 19
Wine, Gerald E., 94, Enders, Neb., Jan. 5
Wysong, Allen, 62, Nappanee, Ind., Jan. 30, 2007
Yeager, Edna Grubbs, 92, Biglerville, Pa., Dec. 17
Yenser, Pauline, 85, Oakwood, Ohio, Dec. 20

Yoder, Royal, 100, McPherson, Kan., Dec. 16

Licensings

Collins, David H., Mid-Atl. Dist. (Monacacy, Rocky Ridge, Md.), Jan. 20
Hartman, Travis E., N. Ind. Dist. (Blue River, Columbia City, Ind.), April 22, 2007
Link, Terry, III & Wis. Dist. (Springfield, Ill.), June 10
Ocker, Carl L., S. Pa. Dist. (Upton, Greencastle, Pa.), Jan. 20

Ordinations

May, Diane M., W. Marva Dist. (Westernport, Md.), Jan. 20
Williams, Donald J., Jr., Shen. Dist. (Moscow, Mount Solon, Va.), Jan. 20

Placements

Davis, James H., Jr., from pastor, North Winona, Warsaw, Ind., to pastor, Union Center, Nappanee, Ind., Feb. 1
Edwards, John G., pastor, Saint Paul, Cana, Va., Jan. 1
Godfrey, Geraldine M., from pastor of nurture, Mechanic Grove, Quarryville, Pa., to pastor, Hanover, Pa., Feb. 1
Hartman, Travis E., associate pastor for youth, Blue River, Columbia City, Ind., Jan. 16
Markle, Brian R., from youth director to associate pastor, West York, York, Pa., Oct. 1
May, Diane M., from associate pastor to pastor, Westernport, Md., Jan. 1
McWilliams, Jay R., pastor, Pleasant View, Red Lion, Pa., Jan. 23
Miller, David W., from pastor, West Richmond, Richmond, Va., to pastor of nurture, Black Rock, Glenville, Pa., Jan. 1
Risser, James K., pastor of outreach, Black Rock, Glenville, Pa., Jan. 13
Webster, Lucy Ann, co-pastor, Moorefield, W.Va., Feb. 1
Webster, Russell W., co-pastor, Moorefield, W.Va., Feb. 1
Yocum, George C., from pastor, Yellow Creek, Hopewell, Pa., to pastor, Forest Chapel, Crimora, Va., Jan. 15

CLASSIFIEDADS

Church of the Brethren Benefit Trust is seeking applicants for the position of President of BBT. The primary services of BBT are the administration of the Pension Plan and the Brethren Foundation. The Position Description can be found on the website of BBT: www.brethrenbenefittrust.org. Church of the Brethren membership is preferred. The President will be expected to live in the Elgin area.

The deadline for applications is April 30, 2008. Applicants are requested to send a current resume, cover letter, and three references. Please send the information via e-mail to Ralph McFadden, Search Committee Consultant, Hikermac@sbcglobal.net. Hard copy, if necessary, may be sent to 352 Shiloh Ct. Elgin, IL 60120.

Executive Director of Development

McPherson College is seeking an outgoing, organized, energetic, self-motivated person who will serve as Director of Development. This position reports to the Vice President of Advancement. The Director will develop and administer a systematic annual giving program including, but not limited to, the following: direct mail, phonathon, local business campaign, planned giving program, and the President's associates program. This person will work collaboratively with staff who directly and indirectly support development efforts. This position involves travel, salary is flexible. Bachelor's degree required. Send cover letter, resume, and references to: Lisa Easter, Human Resources, PO Box 1402, McPherson, KS 67460. Or e-mail easterl@mcpherson.edu. No phone calls please. Applications accepted until position is filled. EOE.

BETHANY SEMINARY—ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT. If you like working with people, like working with a computer, and like being around a vibrant educational environment of a spiritual character, you need to take a closer look at this opportunity! The Institutional Advancement Department at Bethany Theological Seminary is looking for an Administrative Assistant. The position serves as the primary receptionist at Bethany's front desk, maintains donor records systems, processes gifts, and supports the Advancement staff in correspondence, scheduling, and publications. Critical required skills include ability to multitask, to meet the public in person and on the phone, to maintain confidentiality, and to work with computerized record-keeping and communication systems. Knowledge and appreciation of the breadth of Church of the Brethren membership is highly desirable. Starting date negotiable, sometime in summer 2008. Application review will begin May 5 and continue until position is filled. To apply or to seek additional information, contact Lowell Flory, Executive Director of Institutional Advancement, Bethany Theological Seminary, 615 National Road West, Richmond, IN 47374, florylo@bethanyseminary.edu, 800-287-8822.

Traveling to and from Annual Conference in Richmond, Va., July 12-16, consider visiting these Brethren heritage centers in the Harrisonburg area: Bridgewater Retirement Community, Bridgewater, 540-828-2550 or 800-491-9129; CrossRoads Brethren-Mennonite Heritage Center, Harrisonburg, 540-438-1275; John Kline Homestead, Linville Creek CoB, Broadway, 540-896-5001, and the Reuel B. Pritchett Museum, Bridgewater College, 540-828-5462. For details, check these respective websites: www.bridgewaterretirement.org; www.vbmhc.org; www.johnklinehomestead.org and www.bridgewater.edu/pritchettmuseum. Call regarding hours or to make an appointment to visit.

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www.ulv.edu

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CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN HIGHER EDUCATION

Paralysis in the pews

The day did not start out well.

I was in Geneva, Switzerland, covering meetings of the World Council of Churches (WCC), and the first e-mail I opened was from home. It brought word of the mass shootings that had occurred at Northern Illinois University, where I had finished up my graduate studies two years earlier. Several young



WALT WILTSCHKEK
MESSENGER Editor

adults from my church were doing their undergraduate work at the school currently. They were all fine, I learned later, but many others were not.

Ironically, the first event I was to cover that day was a plenary session on overcoming violence. It was difficult to pull my head together for the task of reporting, but it proved a providential assignment. Hearing from people working to counteract violence was a good tonic for the day's bad news.

The session began with a Bible study led by Fernando Enns, a Mennonite professor from Germany and one of the leaders of the Historic Peace Churches events happening over the past decade. He used as his theme the familiar phrase from Luke 2: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace." Peace, he said, "is right at the center of the Christmas story," when Jesus came to a troubled world.

OUR ENDLESS ARGUING LEAVES US EXHAUSTED. OUR OBSESSION WITH DOCTRINAL DETAILS DISTRACTS US FROM THE CENTRAL CALL OF CHRIST TO PREACH THE GOSPEL, MAKE DISCIPLES, AND CARE FOR THE NEEDY AND NEGLECTED.

He connected that incarnation of peace at Christmas to the incarnation needed for peace today: in the people who make up local congregations around the world.

Later sharing brought firsthand stories from Christians in Kenya, who had just endured weeks of devastating violence following contested elections in late December. Political groups in the African nation fall largely along ethnic lines, and so political turmoil brewed into ethnic conflict, with a thousand killed and many more displaced.

Their story underscored Enns' message. When the trouble began in Kenya, most churches found themselves unable or unwilling to respond. The churches were generally organized along the same ethnic lines, and so were as bound up

in the conflict as most of the population. They were too much a part of the problem to offer solutions.

"One of the saddest moments for us," said Agnes Abuom, a WCC central committee member from Kenya, "was the absence of a voice of reason in Kenya from the faith communities."

Mvume Dandala, general secretary of the All Africa Conference of Churches—which is based in Nairobi, Kenya—said the divisions in the country had "paralyzed (the churches) from speaking out."

"We believe that for Kenya and for Africa, church unity and ecumenical cooperation is not just an optional alternative," Dandala said, "but something the churches have to work hard at if they are to be relevant."

Some steps toward unity began when South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu came to Kenya to help the churches come together and build trust. Former United Nations secretary general Kofi Annan, meanwhile, was working at reconciliation among the political parties. The violence has eventually ebbed, but it has left scars and many questions.

"This whole situation has led the churches in Kenya into a deep process of soul-searching," Dandala said.

While gun violence runs rampant in our country, while we remain embroiled in wars in Iraq and elsewhere, while people live in the streets and children die of preventable diseases, it seems that US churches should be doing some

soul-searching, too.

Our internal conflicts render us impotent in addressing the conflicts around us. Our endless arguing leaves us exhausted. Our obsession with doctri-

nal details distracts us from the central call of Christ to preach the gospel, make disciples, and care for the needy and neglected.

Amid the inferno of World War II, pastor Martin Niemoller said, "In Germany they first came for the Communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, and I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me—and by that time no one was left to speak up."

A world weary of body counts is waiting for the embodiment of God's peace. Will the church speak up?—Ed. 

COMING IN MAY: The 300th anniversary series continues into the 20th century with profiles of Dan West and I.N.H. Beahm and other highlights from 1908-1958; the ministry of hospitality; Bible study on the Gospel of John, and more.

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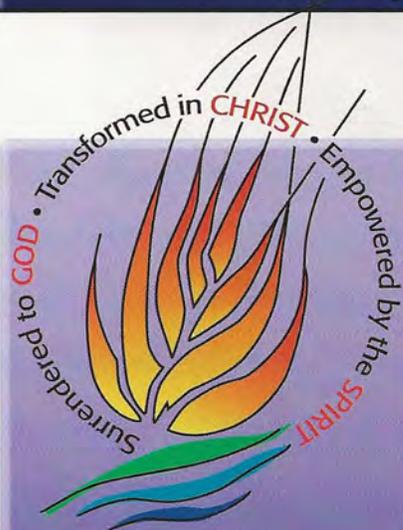
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Conference Highlights

- | | | |
|------------|----------------------|---|
| Saturday | Opening Worship | Speaker: James M. Beckwith, Pastor,
Annville, Pennsylvania |
| | Concert | National Christian Choir (pictured) |
| Sunday* | Worship | Worship Team: Christopher Bowman (CoB)
Arden Gilmore (BC)
Shanthi Edwin (BC) |
| | Heritage Sessions | Afternoon |
| | Missions Celebration | Evening |
| Monday | Worship | Speaker: MaryJo Flory Steury, Exec. Dir.
Ministry Office |
| | Concert | Ken Medema (pictured) |
| Tuesday | Worship | Speaker: Robert Neff, Former General Secretary
"Life Is Great. Yea!" |
| | Drama | |
| Wednesday* | Closing Worship | Worship Team: Shawn Flory Replogle (CoB)
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