



## PUBLICATION INFORMATION

Harriet Sider Bicksler  
Editor

Devin Manzullo-Thomas  
Contributing Editor

*"History Matters" is published three times a year by the Brethren in Christ Historical Society. No subscription charge. Comments, ideas, article suggestions, and letters about "History Matters" may be directed to the Editor:*

Harriet Sider Bicksler  
127 Holly Drive  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

## CONTACT

717 795 9151

info@bic-history.org

www.bic-history.org



facebook.com/bichistory

## Annual Heritage Service To Be Held In-Person Again

We welcome you to our annual Heritage Service on Sunday, June 5, at 3:00 p.m. After two years of virtual services because of pandemic restrictions, we are looking forward to again holding the service at the historic Ringgold Meeting House, 14426 Misty Meadow Rd., Smithsburg, MD 21783. We welcome all who can to join us in person. For those who are unable to attend in person, we will also post a video of the service on our Facebook page and our website.

June 5 is Pentecost Sunday, so we are focusing the service on the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We are pleased to announce that Brother Robert Douglass will be our speaker. He is the pastor

of the Dillsburg Brethren in Christ Church, Dillsburg, PA. He will examine the development of our understanding of the work of the Spirit in our lives as Brethren in Christ and its meaning for us today. We look forward to a significant service in song, prayer, and the Word.

A special thank you to the trustees of the Ringgold Meeting House for their care of the building and property.



## Bus Tour of Historic Sites in Kansas During 2022 General Assembly

This summer, as part of the General Assembly of the Brethren in Christ U.S. in Salina, Kansas, the Historical Society and the Midwest Conference will co-sponsor a bus tour of the historical Dickinson County church sites, including visits to the cemeteries where individuals can look for family connections. Registration for this tour can be done through the registration procedure for the General Assembly ([bicus.org/event/general-assembly-2022/](http://bicus.org/event/general-assembly-2022/)). The Historical

Society is very pleased to work with Bishop Ron Bowell of the Midwest Conference as the tour guide. Ron has also drawn up a map of the route. The tour will take approximately four hours. Watch for more information ahead of the assembly.



Two previous General Conferences held in Kansas: **top**, 1909, Abilene church; **bottom**, 1936: Bethel church.

For a small denomination, considerable research and writing on the Brethren in Christ has been done since the mid 1900s. Asa Climenhaga's *History of the Brethren in Christ* appeared in 1942, followed by Carlton O. Wittlinger's *Quest for Piety and Obedience* in 1978. In the latter year, the Brethren in Christ Historical Society published the first issue of its journal, *Brethren in Christ History and Life*. Since then we have witnessed an outpouring of biographies and autobiographies, regional and institutional histories, and more. A proof of this productivity may be seen in the many books about our church on shelves in the archives at Messiah University.

Given this volume of publication, what remains to be written? Plenty, I respond. What follows are some subjects that invite our attention. Some subjects would expand work already done; some would explore new areas.

A relatively unexplored area is marriage. The subject is somewhat sociological in nature, which may help to explain the lack of attention it has received: Brethren in Christ writers of our history are historians, not sociologists. The subject invokes a series of questions to explore: What were dating practices? How and where were weddings conducted? If those to be wedded belonged to different denominations, what factors determined to what group the newly wedded would belong? How and why did marriage concepts and practices change over the years? Such lines of search could be multiplied.

Similarly with writing about families. For example, how prevalent was family worship, what were its features, and how uniform were those features throughout the church? What family leadership patterns prevailed? (Did the father/husband make all the decisions for the family?) How did families relate to the church? What contributions did they make? (Some years ago I was fascinated by a presentation made by Mennonite historian Robert Kreider in which he traced one family's involvement with the church over several generations.)

We have been well served by many biographies and autobiographies. Many more lives should be explored. A list of those now deceased could include Ross and Roxena Nigh, Wilmer and Velma Heisey, Asa and Anna Climenhaga, Charles and Mary Eshelman, Anna Engle, Henry H. and Grace Brubaker, Lester and Mary Fretz, Peter and Mary Willms, Henry and Katie Smith, Ray and Audrey Hostetter. Some biographies already written could be expanded, such as some of those in *Celebrating Women's Stories*.

Limited space necessitates only listing other possible subjects:

- The contribution of our church schools to church life;
- The influence of occupation and occupational change on our church life—past and present;
- Major studies of individual congregations;
- History, nature, and influence of such activities as love feasts, Bible conferences, congregational council meetings, and General Conferences;
- A comprehensive description and evaluation of church literature, including the *Evangelical Visitor*, *Sunday School Herald*,

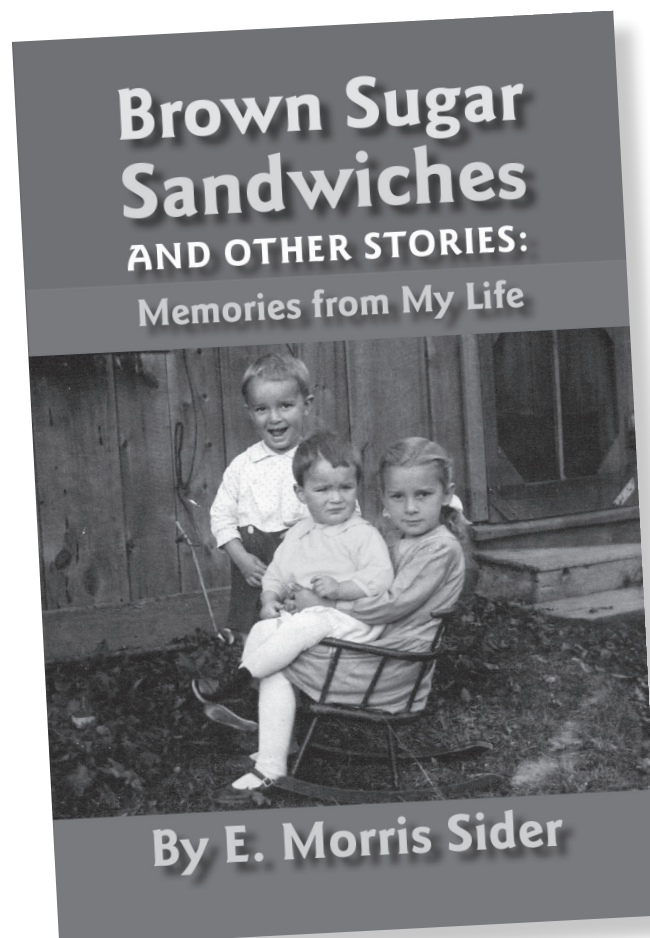
*Sunbeams, Shalom!*, biographies and autobiographies, and the Historical Society's journal;

- Church relationships with those outside the group, such as religious organizations, other denominations, the local community, seminaries;
- Brethren in Christ involvement in such service industries as health and education.

Of course, more subjects could be added to this list. I hope these suggestions will help to inspire a continuing search for a meaningful past and present.

**Editor's note:** My thanks to Morris Sider for providing this rich listing of possible subjects for more historical research and writing. If the list inspires additional ideas for research, or if it inspires you to begin your own research and writing into some aspect of Brethren in Christ history that interests you, please contact me.

E. Morris Sider is professor emeritus at Messiah University and editor emeritus of *Brethren in Christ History and Life*. He is the author of more than thirty books, including his most recent one, *Brown Sugar Sandwiches and Other Stories: Memories from My Life* (Brethren in Christ Historical Society, 2021). Copies are available for \$10 each plus postage. Contact the editor.





## News and Notes

From the Brethren in Christ Historical Library & Archives

### Breaking Bread with Brothers and Sisters in Christ

by Devin Manzullo-Thomas

Recently the Brethren in Christ Archives received an inquiry about recipes for communion bread used by congregations in the past. That request led us through a fascinating search in published and unpublished materials in our collection—with the result of uncovering recipes used in Brethren in Christ churches across the United States and Canada for many generations! Here we share two of those recipes, along with stories and images that illustrate our shared history as a faith community.



Women from the Highland Brethren in Christ Church prepare tables for the love feast meal during the General Conference of 1911. Pictured left to right: Mary Dohner, Emma Thuma Bechtel, Cora Harshberger, Anna Moist Cassel, Lida Moist, Mary Hershey Hoover, Albert Breneman, Elizabeth Engle Moist, and Ella Hershey Lewis.

#### Communion Bread

(Enough for Highland Love Feast)

½ lb. unsalted butter  
½ pt. sweet milk  
3 ½ cups flour  
½ tbs. granulated sugar

Mix all together. Knead with hands until pliable, not sticky. (This is the symbol that the church is one and can't be separated.) Grease pan lightly. Place dough on pan and roll out. Use a cookie sheet turned upside-down. Trim. Cut into 1" strips and prick with fork. Save a little flour to work in later, if needed. Bake until lightly browned. Store strips in flat container. Weight it with a catalogue to keep the strips from curling.

If you are interested in receiving copies of these or other communion bread recipes, please contact [archives@messiah.edu](mailto:archives@messiah.edu).

Aunt Elizabeth Hoke wanted me to let her know the first time I used this recipe as a new bride and pastor's wife. My children always hoped there would be some [bread] left over for them!

—Submitted by Mildred K. Brubaker, for *The Heritage Cookbook* (1987), published by the Brethren in Christ Church and available in our collection

#### Communion Bread

(Serves 225 People)

1 pt. sweet milk  
½ lb. unsalted butter  
7 cups plain flour

Warm milk, but do not boil. Put butter into warm milk and let it cool, then add flour. Knead dough until soft, adding pinches of flour. Roll out on floured board to very thin thickness. I mark the bread (with a ruler) into 1" squares and prick each square with a fork. Let cool for 5 mins. and cut into 1" squares with bread knife. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 or 30 mins.

You can halve the recipe for smaller congregations.



Denny and Marie Jennings started the Brethren in Christ work in Virginia around 1917. According to Denny's obituary in the *Evangelical Visitor*, he "pastored the Bethel congregation for 35 years" and "assisted in opening [the congregation] at Farris Mines."

This was Sister Marie Jennings' (Brother Denny Jennings' wife's) recipe. Pioneers of the Brethren in Christ Church in Virginia, she gave it to me in 1951, when my husband was called to the ministry. Bishop Henry Ginder always complimented me on my communion bread. I have used it for 34 years.

—Submitted by Colleene White for *The Heritage Cookbook* (1987), published by the Brethren in Christ Church and available in our collection



BRETHREN IN CHRIST  
**HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY**

One University Ave., Suite 3002  
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Mechanicsburg, PA  
Permit No. 130

*Address Service Requested*

## Images from the Past

*From the photograph collection of the Brethren in Christ Historical Library & Archives*



*The interior and exterior of the Fairview Avenue meeting-house as they would have appeared about the time of its reopening.*

In October 1939, after several years of not meeting, the Brethren in Christ in Waynesboro, Pennsylvania, gathered for worship in the church building on Fairview Avenue. Originally organized about 1916 but dormant for about five years in the mid-1930s, the church reopened under Pastor Samuel Wolgemuth with a two-week series of revival meetings conducted by Abner Martin of Donegal District. As Sam and his wife, Grace, reported in the *Evangelical Visitor* a month after these services, “We shall never forget the thrill that we got when we saw people filling that red brick church on that first night. Truly God does exceeding[ly,] abundantly above what we could ask or think.”

