



PUBLICATION INFORMATION

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Correction: In the Spring 2024 edition of "History Matters," the evangelist who taught Morris Sider's father how to read music was incorrectly identified as Noah Zook. The evangelist was John R. Zook.

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Historical Society Forges Partnerships

Zambia Christian University

The Brethren in Christ Historical Society and the Zambian Christian University (ZACU) are collaborating partners for research on the Brethren in Christ in Zambia and the United States. This collaboration has two foci:

- 1. Research and publication:** Teams from the US and Zambia will travel for extended periods (likely at least two months) to conduct research with partners in the other country instigated at the request of the country that is the subject of the research in question. The goal is to produce publishable products. One specific project is a book comprised of the four articles on the history of Sikalongo Mission that Dwight Thomas published in *Brethren in Christ History and Life*. This project will be funded by Thomas International.
- 2. Practical endeavors:** These include communication and application of the research by Brethren in Christ scholars to the church in Zambia and the US. We are working on the repatriation of historical materials by sharing documents, pictures, artifacts, etc. between Zambia and the US, under the careful control of ZACU and the Brethren in Christ His-

torical Society and the Archives. Issues of copyright will be addressed.

Theological Study Forum

For the last fifteen years, the Theological Study Forum (TSF) has met three times a year "to provide a healthy forum for Brethren in Christ pastors, church leaders, and others to explore and discuss relevant theological and ministry-related issues." The TSF is led by coordinator Bob Verno and the steering team of Curtis Book, Ray Kipe, Sheri Flohr, Lois Saylor, and John Yeatts, along with technician Ryan Cagno. The TSF seeks to serve the Brethren in Christ Church by facilitating a deeper, more rounded consideration of a wide range of topics without promoting particular views or an agenda of change within the Brethren in Christ.

Over the years, the Historical Society has occasionally published papers in *Brethren in Christ History and Life* that were originally prepared for the TSF, and the journal has informed the discussion of topics at TSF. Therefore, at our April 2, 2024 meeting this productive relationship, like our similar arrangement with the Zambian Christian University, was recognized in the Brethren in Christ Historical Society minutes. Such relationships provide a rich interaction that benefits all participants.

Recaps: Heritage Service and Annual Meeting

The Annual Heritage Service at the Ringgold Meetinghouse was held on June 2. The service began with singing from the "brown hymnal," *Spiritual Songs And Hymns*, and a time for testimonies. Then Rob Patterson, bishop of the Allegheny Conference, spoke on "and," describing how the Brethren in Christ began as Anabaptists and added Pietism, and then Wesleyan holiness, and then since the 1950s we have been heavily influenced by Evangelicalism. We were open to new truth in contemporary movements and as-

simulated them "with a difference." Rob asked, "What is the light we will add next?"

Traditionally, the annual meeting is held in the fall, but this year it met during the Brethren in Christ U.S. General Assembly in Cincinnati, Ohio. About fifty people gathered to listen to five stories about the beginnings of Brethren in Christ congregations in Ohio. Excerpts from those stories are on pages 2-3, and the full stories will be published in the December 2024 journal.

Excerpts from the 2024 Historical Society Annual Meeting:

The 2024 Annual Meeting of the Historical Society was held on July 14 during the 2024 General Assembly in Cincinnati, Ohio. Several individuals with roots in the Brethren in Christ Church in Ohio told stories about the history of several congregations. Following are excerpts from those stories; watch for the full texts in the December 2024 edition of Brethren in Christ History and Life.



Highland Church during a General Conference in 1911.

Three Ohio Churches and Church Expansion

I am a son of the Pleasant Hill Congregation of the Brethren in Christ. Our family returned from India in 1963 and became part of this congregation. It was my Dad's home church, and his parents called this congregation home. During their one hundredth anniversary presentation I talked about church expansion.

I noted the progressive planting of churches on State Route 48 beginning with the Fairview Congregation in 1876 (Englewood), then the Highland congregation in 1890 (West Milton), and eventually the Pleasant Hill congregation in 1912. These dates relate to their building church structures for meetings. I suggested three possible reasons why this particular kind of expansion ended.

1. The direction of expansion changed on Route 48. In 1912, the challenge of the city of Dayton, Ohio, south of Englewood, was taken up by the brothers and sisters.
2. The general expansion of the Brethren in Christ Church at this time was moving west. There are church leaders in the southern Ohio district whose names show up in Indiana.
3. A third reason may be more familial or sociological. The Fairview and Highland congregations both developed church cemeteries as a part of their physical property. The Pleasant Hill congregation did not develop a cemetery.

— Ken Hoke, Carlisle, PA

Dayton Brethren in Christ Mission

The ministry of the Dayton Brethren in Christ Mission, started in 1912, continues to the present day, 112 years later, in ways that vary with the needs and change with the possibilities, all with the desire to see God's Kingdom grow.

We became aware of many children in our neighborhood who needed to be in church. We bused these lovable, streetwise, many times difficult to manage children to church Sunday mornings, Sunday evenings, and



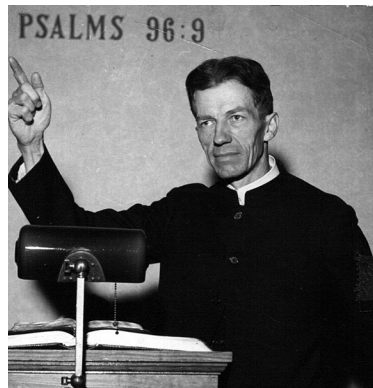
The Dayton Mission and parsonage after 1936.

Wednesday evenings. We had VBS in the summers, and by times we had additional club times for them. This opportunity lasted almost ten years. We had as many as sixty-six children midweek.

We hold monthly chapel services on various campuses of Dayton Christian Schools. At one time there were five elementary campuses, now consolidated into one larger one. For more than forty-five years we have ministered to these hundreds, probably thousands of children, seeing many of them saved, counseling others, and discipling them in the Christian life.

In 2018 our son started a recovery service for drug and alcohol addicts. Full Circle is a tremendously successful program, in which clients graduate after four or five months clean. During that time in residence they get medical help, counseling, group sessions, and also job training and placement. In six years there have been 950 alumni. We make Bibles and other literature available for clients to take as well as clip boards with forms to be filled out with individuals' prayer requests.

— Ruth Pawelski, Dayton, OH



Ohmer Herr, Fairview pastor, 1929-1959.

Englewood, Ohio and the Fairview Church

In 2022, the Fairview Brethren in Christ Church in Englewood, Ohio celebrated its 175th anniversary. Shortly before, newly discovered documents showed how closely the history of the church and the city of Englewood were linked.

The village of Englewood and vicinity was formed in 1800. The Hoover and Mast families

were some of the earliest settlers in this area. The Jacob Ulery family followed and purchased four hundred acres of land between the Stillwater Valley and the town of Salem.

Sometime during 1829, Mr. Ulery noticed a cluster of stones in a plot of ground on his property. It was supposed that Indians and white men must have been buried there. The Ulery family decided that would make a good burial ground and donated one acre of land to be used as a cemetery. More land was donated later by the Herr family. In 1835 the River Brethren Church was organized and named the Fairview congregation, and the same name was given to the cemetery.

Vignettes of Ohio Church History

In those early days the church meetings were held in homes. In the winter they met in homes and during warmer weather, in barns.

Fast forward many years: After much discussion among the brethren, a decision was made to build a church for the community of Brethren in Christ believers. The original building was erected in 1876 at the corner of Union Boulevard and Route 40 (National Road). In 1973 the congregation decided to build a new church. The venture was completed in 1975 at which time the entire congregation paraded (with police escort) from the old church, down Union Boulevard to the new building. Further expansion took place in 1989 when a large addition was built.

You can still find the original Fairview Church on Union Blvd. across from the Fairview Cemetery.

— Connie Niesley Palmus, *Englewood, OH*



Maple Grove church.

Brethren in Christ Presence in Clark County, Ohio 1879-1923

The earliest Brethren in Christ pioneers to Southern Ohio came from Pennsylvania using the Old National Road, currently Route 40. They were looking for farmland to purchase and raise their families. Several families located in Clark County. Brethren in Christ settlements in Miami County to the west and Stark County to the north had been established previously.

The first mention of an elected overseer for the district was Levi Lukenbaugh who was chosen in 1879. Before any meetinghouses were built, the families worshipped in the homes or barns of members. As membership grew, the need for a separate place to worship became evident. In 1886, the Maple Grove church at Donnelville was built and in 1889 a school house in Medway was purchased. By 1888, total membership was recorded at 51.

Springfield was a growing and thriving community and many of the farmers sold their land and moved to the city. In Springfield, members worshipped in homes. A Sunday School was held in 1911 in the Jacob Ulery home; regular preaching services were held in the A. B. Wingert home as well as the Linkey home, all located within two city blocks. In February 1911, the council decided to sell the Medway Meeting House to pay for the lot and building on the corner of George Street and Maiden Lane in order that “no debt would be incurred.” Beulah Chapel was ready for occupancy by July of that same year. By 1913, attendance was in the mid-eighties. Occasional love feasts and special meetings continued at the Maple Grove location until it was sold to Springfield Hatchery Co.



Beulah Chapel.

By 1923, Beulah Chapel underwent their first expansion to accommodate the children who were coming for Sunday School. When Beulah Chapel was rededicated in 1951 after it was remodeled, part of the service enjoined the congregants to affirm the following statements: This house is dedicated to the public worship of the trinity, for the training of children, calling youth to a life of Christian service, cherishing the family, to evangelism and “nourishment of his lambs,” to help those “confused and distressed,” to console the dying and bereaved and in memory of those who have finished their course. These statements serve well the intent of the early brethren as they found their way to be the church in Southern Ohio.

— Beth Ulery Saba, *Springfield, OH*

East Dayton Fellowship

I was taught to know and love God, follow Jesus, and depend on the Holy Spirit at Fairview Brethren in Christ in Englewood, Ohio as a teenager in the 1990s. I received a call to ministry as a seventeen-year-old at the Memorial Holiness Camp in West Milton, Ohio as part of a Missions Day altar call.

About seven years later, toward the end of my seminary training, the congregation that first nurtured me in the faith called me to return to them and help them plant a daughter congregation. We decided together to find a poor and underserved neighborhood in Dayton, Ohio (the main city of our region) and do the planting there.

In 2011 the work began, and by 2012 I moved into the home I still occupy on S. Garland Ave. The congregation we planted there was called the Shepherd’s Table and served as a daughter site of Fairview Brethren in Christ. The house was located a couple hundred feet from a long established Church of the Brethren congregation in a large, red-brick building. The attendance hovered around ten people at that church when I first got to know them.

When I moved in, I immediately reached out to that congregation and communicated my desire to work together for Jesus’s Kingdom purposes. They were receptive to that appeal. My first summer living in the neighborhood we hosted a neighborhood VBS program on the property of that church (the East Dayton COB).

In 2016, we moved our main services from Saturdays to Sundays and from the basement into the sanctuary of the COB church. I took to preaching for them as well as for the Shepherd’s Table. Finally, in 2023 we created an officially merged and dual affiliated congregation out of the two formerly separate ones.

— Zach Spidel, *Dayton, OH*



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Images from the Past

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

The Brethren in Christ and International Students

How do students find colleges? They often get connected with schools through someone they already know.

In the early 1900s, most international students learned about Messiah through the Brethren in Christ Church (BIC), BIC congregations and missionaries around the world helped students to register and pay for classes.

How might a BIC connection have shaped the way international students saw Messiah? What are some similarities in these students' educational goals? Are there any differences?

The First International Students

In 1905, Turkey's government launched the genocide of Armenian Christians, killing about one million people. An Armenian BIC missionary named Ruben Krikorian helped three young Armenian boys—Messiah Krikorian (the oldest), Hovakim Krikorian, and Jacob Shehagian—to escape Turkey and travel to the United States.

In 1911, an Armenian began classes at Messiah Bible College, becoming the school's first international student. Their original challenges at the college were learning English and paying tuition. After a year, Messiah became a BIC institution.

Canadian BIC Students

Large numbers of Messiah students came from BIC Churches in Canada. Some attended both the junior and senior college, while others only stayed for a single semester.

While many Canadian students did not identify as international students, others found a sense of belonging in the international student community. Because Messiah was another North American BIC school, many Canadian students found much to like and did not experience significant culture shock.

Evangelical VISITOR

Rev. Samuel Willingham, Chairman of the Board for World Missions, is shown conferring with Messianic students in the 'N. Messianic Church, the Messianic Church building in the year of the Messianic Church's first year.

Photograph of Canadian Students 1915

From left to right: Jesse Stockley, Edward Gilmore, Elmer Shehagian, Chris Sider, Cory Sider, Sider, Ezra Sider, Sider, Lattie Clowbridge, Pearl Swain, and Alma Collier Stockley.

"The Young Men From Turkey" c. 1912-1915

This photograph was published in a pamphlet to raise awareness of the Armenian Genocide in Turkey. From left to right: Jacob Shehagian, Hovakim Krikorian, and Ruben Krikorian.

"The Conquered Conflicts of My Life" Messiah Paul Krikorian 1918

In this memoir, Messiah Krikorian describes the violence of the genocide, which took his father's life. His journey to America, his studies at Messiah, and the early years of his ministry.

During the spring 2024 semester, Archives intern Alex Shehagian (Messiah University Class of 2024) designed a new temporary exhibit. Titled “The World and Messiah: International Students, 1911 to Today,” the exhibit uses photographs, print materials, and artifacts from the Brethren in Christ Historical Library and Archives and the Messiah University Archives to tell the story of more than one hundred years of international students studying at the university. Included in the exhibit are stories of several Brethren in Christ, including Sampson Mudenda, a Zambian Brethren in Christ minister and superintendent of churches who studied at Messiah in the 1960s and 1970s.

Historical Society members who live within traveling distance of the Archives are encouraged to view the exhibit, which will remain in place through the end of 2024. For visiting hours, send an email to Archives@messiah.edu or call 717-691-6048.