

Goshen College Archives

With the 2017 relocation of the Mennonite Church USA Archives to Elkhart, a separate Goshen College Archives has begun to take shape.

The primary purpose of the Goshen College Archives is to house and provide access to the institutional records of Goshen College.

However, the GC Archives also houses personal collections of GC faculty members and some records of College Mennonite Church.

The individual collections mean that GC Archives includes documents on many topics of interest beyond Goshen College itself.

For example: post-WWII relief work (H.S. Bender & G.F. Hershberger), hymnody (Mary Oyer), translations of Amish historical documents (John S.

Umble). Currently only a small number of collections are represented online in the Mennonite Archival Commons: <http://mac.libraryhost.com/>

People wishing to consult materials in the GC Archives should begin by contacting the Mennonite Historical Library at least one day in advance of desired use (574-535-7418. mhl@goshen.edu).

Since archival collections are still stored in GC's Newcomer Center, it is usually not possible for the MHL staff to provide same-day access to collections.

Ordinarily, researchers interested in GC archival materials will need to come to the 3rd floor of GC's Good Library building, at the center of the campus at 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526.

Joe Springer, curator

Leadership Search

In 2019 MAH members will need to elect a new president and a new treasurer, since the allowed two terms of the current officers, Ervin Beck and Miriam Yutzy, will have expired. Give suggestions for nominees to Ruby Bontrager, Al Yoder or Helene Hoover.

Yellow Creek Wisler Mennonite Church building, CRs 3&4. The earlier building is the gabled structure at the rear.



Elkhart, IN 46516

2005 E. Jackson

Helene Hoover, Membership

Est. 1992

HISTORIANS
Michiana Anabaptist



MAH News and Notes

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Send events, reviews or articles to Ervin Beck: ervinb@goshen.edu.

Kristin Troyer, layout
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Membership is \$10 per year. Renew at meetings or send payment to Helene.

All members, please give your e-mail address to Helene.

Meeting usually on the third Saturdays of March and October.

Programs on the Brethren in Christ Church And All-Hostetler Kin at Oct. 20 Meeting

Jeff Williams, pastor of the Nappanee Brethren in Christ Church, will speak on the history, faith and practice of that Anabaptist denomination at the fall meeting of Michiana Anabaptist Historians on Saturday, October 20. The meeting will be held at the Nappanee church, located just south of NorthWood High School on SR 19.

Jeff, who graduated from Messiah College with majors in Bible and Philosophy, has been at the Nappanee church since 2000, first serving as intern, then associate pastor and today as senior pastor.

The Brethren in Christ denomination consists of 300 congregations in the U.S. and Canada, with more in Africa and elsewhere. According to Jeff, the BIC denomination represents an integration of elements from the Anabaptist, Pietist and Wesleyan Holiness movements.

A second local BIC congregation, Union Grove BIC, is located at 69954 CR 11 and pastored by Darin Simm.

The morning will begin at 8:30 with registration and coffee, followed by a business meeting at 9 a.m. Jeff's program will begin at 9:30, followed by a

10:30 coffee break and a second program at 11 a.m., presented by Daniel E. Hochstetler.

Dan's program will introduce us to the Hostetler/Hochstetler descendants of the Jacob Hochstetler family who arrived in the U.S. in 1738. The 7th Nationwide Gathering took place July 27 and 28 at Berlin, Ohio, drawing 600 attendees. Dan was a co-founder of the group, long-time editor of its newsletter and is currently vice-president.

There are at least eleven different spellings of the family name in the U.S., including Hostutler, Hogstadler, Hostetar, etc.

After the meeting ends at 12 noon, attendees are invited to an open house at the Stump family log house and homestead on the hill east of Nappanee at the intersection of CR 50 and CR 15, where the first Brethren in Christ congregation, having moved to UnionTownship in 1840, first met. At the southwest corner of the intersection is the first BIC church building, now owned by a different denomination. The Stump buildings, now owned by Helen Mishler, are remarkably well preserved, both inside and out.



Allen Martin (left) and Ken Yoder, presenters at the March 17 meeting. Yoder, who is editor of the Yoder family newsletter, spoke about Yoder family origins in Switzerland, their immigration to North America, and the all-Yoder international reunion held in Summer 2017 in Shipshewana. The family name is now spelled in 14 different ways: Yother, Yothers, Yotter, Yoter, Yoders, Loder, Joder, Jotter, Joders, Youder, Youther, Yothers, Youthers. The name presumably derives from the name of St. Theodore, if pronounced "thee-yoder."

Pastors and Librarians:

Please post this letter in a public place. Thank you.



The large audience at the October 17, 2017, meeting.

Wisler Mennonite Church Profile

Notes from the presentation at the spring 2018 meeting by Allen Martin, pastor of the Fairview Wisler Mennonite Church.

The Wisler church began in 1872 when Jacob Wisler and others left the Yellow Creek Mennonite Church in disagreement over Sunday School, singing in parts and evangelistic meetings. The Yellow Creek Old Order Mennonite Church separated from the Wisler Church in 1916 over use of the telephone, especially.

Wislers, who also regard themselves as “old order,” refer to their more conservative neighbors as “horse and buggy” or “John Martin” Mennonites. Wislers maintain the old order to fulfill the Scripture: “Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, today and forever.” As Allen put it, “God is an old order God.”

There are 10 Wisler congregations, in Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and Minnesota, with 35 ministers, all ordained by lot. Ministers meet twice yearly in conference, for “encouragement to press on.” Wislers associate with the Weaverland Conference and with the Muddy Creek Library, both in Pennsylvania.

The Schleithem Confession supports an inward-looking church concerned with preserving essential values, not reforming the government or converting the unsaved. “The quiet in the land.” The Dordrecht Confession is used in instruction meetings twice yearly. The Wisler confession of faith includes the “Garden City Fundamentals,”

as formulated by Daniel Kauffman.

Gelassenheit, or yieldedness, is a key value, imitating Jesus: “Not my will, but Thine be done.” It is a choice, not a requirement. Living a “separated life” is more important than being “a light to the world.”

Worship services begin with three songs, led from the congregation, followed by a silent prayer, which fosters personal responsibility before God. Songs are sung in parts, using a hymnal lacking musical notes. An audible prayer concludes with all saying The Lord’s Prayer.

In the meeting house, people sit on three sides of a long preacher’s bench, men on one side, women on the other. A typical service lasts two hours; communion, with foot-washing, lasts three hours, and is preceded by a service of preparation.

Until 1946, some songs were in German. In the 1960s, part-singing began, as well as weddings held in the church. Receptions, reunions, etc. are held in Harrison School, which the Wislers now own, or in a Wisler community center nearby.

In addition to the customary eight grades, the school also offers a high school diploma to a few students who choose it.



Interior of the Yellow Creek church, with long preachers’ bench

Amish Arts Exhibit at Goshen College

The exhibit “Amish Arts 1900-1940: From the Pottinger Collection” continues until Nov. 18 in the Library Gallery at Goshen College. The exhibit includes many different kinds of domestic folk arts from Amish communities, mainly in northern Indiana, including a number of important items with documented origins in ancestors of current Mennonite and Amish families:

- A quilt made by Esther Beachy (Mrs. Henry D.) Yoder in Hicksville, Ohio, c. 1920. She was the mother of Bertha (Mrs. Amos D.) Bontrager of Honeyville.

- A chest of drawers made for Elizabeth Yoder in 1871 for her marriage to Reuben E. Bontrager in 1872. Elizabeth was the mother of Levi Bontrager, who married Annie Christner.
- A one-drawer stand made for Tobias Kemp in 1880 for his marriage to Mary Christner of Holmes County, Ohio.
- A blanket chest made by Sam Miller for Lena Schrock for her marriage in 1903 to Samuel J. Whetstone.

The furniture is similar to that made in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, from which many Amish and Mennonites

moved to Elkhart and LaGrange Counties: red, green and black paint with gold stencils and inscriptions.

*Another unusual piece is a carving in a bottle made in 1919 by Daniel Rose, a Mennonite man from Johnstown, PA, who was confined to a wheelchair and was registered in Washington, D.C., as “Champion Whittler of the United States.”

This exhibit is free of charge and sponsored by the Mennonite-Amish Museum Committee. Call 574-535-7418 for open hours.



Program on Baptism Colloquy

On Friday, October 5, John Rempel will report on the recent “Trilateral Dialogue on Baptism” involving Mennonite World Conference, the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church. Rempel, who participated in the conference, will reflect on the dialogue process, the concluding statement and its relevance for Mennonites today. The meeting is open to the public, from 11 to 1 p.m. at the Lambright Center, Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart. Bring your own lunch.

Speaking of Yoders

The U.S. Census Department finds 45,000 citizens with the family name of Yoder. 98.1% of them self-identify as “white,” the family name with the highest such percentage. “Statistically speaking, the Yoders of America are probably the least likely white people to marry someone of a different race to themselves,” says Mona Chalabi in the Feb. 26, 2018, issue of *The Guardian*. Other Germanic family names in descending amounts of whiteness include Kruger 97.1, Mueller 97.1, Koch 96.9, Schwartz 96.8, Schmitt 96.8.

Yellow Creek Cemetery Records

The Yellow Creek Frame Cemetery of Harrison Township, Elkhart County, IN.

Ed. James G. Hermsen and Thelma L. Hoover Martin, July 2010 (500 pp., \$65).

Old Yellow Creek Cemetery.

Ed. James G. Hermsen, April 2011 (\$36).

Copies of these books are now available from Lester Martin (574-831-2497), singly or at \$100 for the pair.