



MAH News and Notes

MICHIANA ANABAPTIST HISTORIANS

Light from the past | Established 1992

Spring 2019

www.michianaanabaptists.org

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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.

Nominees for president and treasurer of MAH will be proposed by a committee consisting of Ruby Bontrager, Al Yoder and John Lapp. Contact them with suggestions, or nominate from the floor on March 23.

Global Mennonite Church Histories at March 23 Meeting at Seminary

Although Michiana Anabaptist Historians is a project in local church history, the Spring 2019 program will “go global” by featuring the histories of the Mennonite Church in five different countries.

The meeting will be held in the dining room of the Lambright Center at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart.

At 9:30 a.m. Jamie Pitts, Associate Professor of Anabaptist Studies, will introduce a panel of four international students at AMBS, each of whom will narrate the past 50 years of Mennonite history in their home countries. They include Benjamin Krauss, Germany; Esther Muhagachi, Tanzania; Sung Bin Kim, South Korea; and Marcus Acosta, Argentina.

The 11 a.m. program will be a progress report by John D. Roth, Professor of History at Goshen College, who is writing a history of the Mennonite churches in Indonesia.

The book will be available prior to the meeting of Mennonite World Conference in Indonesia in 2021. John is director of the Center for the Study of Global Anabaptism at the college.

The seminary is located at 3003 Benham Ave. in Elkhart. To find the Lambright Center, enter the campus via the main/north entrance off Benham Ave.

The meeting opens at 8:30 a.m. with registration and coffee. The business meeting at 9 will include elections for president and treasurer.

Slippery Slope? Schism? Renewal?

by Ervin Beck

During the six years that I have been MAH president, many changes have occurred in the Anabaptist churches that MAH serves.

Four have closed (Pleasant Oaks, Forks, Clinton Brick, Topeka). One has dropped “Mennonite” from its name (Clinton Frame). One has become a “community” church (Jefferson Church of the Brethren). Many have left MCUSA and Indiana-Michigan Conference

(Good Shepherd, Shore, Pleasant View, Yellow Creek, Clinton Frame) Some have affiliated with the new Evana network, or affiliated with different regional conferences. Some are still pondering their identities and affiliations.

At worst, we might be in a slippery-slope era, as in the old Mennonite proverb, “If the covering strings go, then everything goes.” Some

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Downsizing?

Consider donating your Anabaptist-Mennonite items to these public collections—but call first:

Papers to the Mennonite Church USA archives in Elkhart

574-294-7523

Books and periodicals to Mennonite Historical Library, Goshen College

574-535-7418

Artifacts to the museum collection of the Mennonite Historical Library

574-535-7418

From “Slippery Slope” on p. 1

see harbingers of decline and loss. Others see renewal, as discussed by John D. Roth, in his thoughtful essay, “Schism or renewal?” in *The Mennonite* (Dec. 2018, p. 39).

Meanwhile, Michiana Anabaptist Historians continues to serve as an umbrella organization for all Anabaptist groups, offering (like MCC) a common ground for conversation and fellowship despite differences in affiliation and commitments.

During those same six years, the MAH has remained faithful to its original mission and vision, and has achieved some modest goals.

We noted the 25th anniversary of the founding of MAH in 1992. We enjoyed 24 programs on local Anabaptist history, faith and culture, at 12 different venues, and provided three summer field trips to interesting Anabaptist sites in Elkhart and LaGrange Counties (thanks to Helene Hoover).

The MAH website was revived and improved by Karl Stutsman. The newsletter (12 issues) was enhanced in design; changed in production;

and bulk mailed (200+ copies) to 80 members and related institutions. We have a new logo and letterhead design.

We placed a handsome historical marker at Prairie Street Mennonite Church in Elkhart, to remember the work of John F. and Salome Funk in service to the local and national Mennonite Church. And in 2020, in cooperation with Yellow Creek churches, we will also erect a similar marker at the crossroads of the Yellow Creek settlement. We added Allen Martin, from the Wisler Mennonite Church, to the executive committee.

Although attendance at meetings has been variable, the membership roll has remained steady. MAH faces the challenge of increasing membership and finding ways to promote interest in Anabaptist history among younger people, whether by their coming to meetings or by holding offices, or by MAH providing special services and programs for them.

I have enjoyed being president and acknowledge the wonderful support and cooperation by other officers and members.

Speaking of Hochstetlers

Notes from Dan Hochstetler’s presentation

Three of the four descendants of Jacob Hochstetler had large families that tended to remain Amish (or became Mennonite), which accounts for their huge presence in Anabaptist genealogies in North America.

Hostetler, Hochstetler, Hochstedler, Hostedler, Hochstettler, Hostettler, Hoestetler, Hochstedtler, Hosteter,

Hogstdler, Hostutler.

Dan Hochstetler has devoted much time and effort to improving the “big” Hostetler genealogy published in 1912 by Harvey Hostetler. He has corrected, with historical details, some mythical elements of the “Hochstetler Massacre” story from colonial Pennsylvania.

That story gained national attention when the singer and actor Kaley Segal, a Hochstetler descendant, told it during her interview on the TLC--TV program, “Who Do You Think You Are.” She was joined in the program by Ervin Stutzman, former executive director of MC-USA, her 7th cousin through Jacob’s daughter Barbara.



Above: Helen Mishler (left) and Roberta Miller Yoder (right) in the Stump house. Notice the old paneling with wallpaper and paint.

Right: At the fall 2018 meeting, Jeff Williams (right) spoke on Brethren in Christ history, faith and practice and Dan Hochstetler explained the importance of the Jacob Hochstetler immigrant family (from 1738) in Amish and Mennonite history. Informative handouts from both speakers will be available at the March 2019 meeting.



Left: The Daniel Stump homestead (c. 1848) at CRs 50/15, where BIC services were held following a group migration from Ontario to Union Twp, in 1838. Currently owned by Helen Mishler (left) with sister June (deceased) and Peter Koontz. The large log house, with two full floors and basement, is very well preserved. All interior walls and ceilings have original wood paneling, including wainscoting, with early paint and wallpaper remaining. It never has had electricity or running water because an Amish family lived in it until after World War 2. At far left, a summer kitchen, or "apple butter house," with very large fireplace; a later east addition (c. 1870); the main house with new metal roof; behind it, an unusual brick cistern.

Brethren in Christ (bicus.org)

Notes from Jeff Williams' presentation

Origins near Bainbridge, Lancaster Co, Pennsylvania c. 1776. Earlier called "River Brethren," referring to baptism by immersion. "Three times facing forward." Combined Anabaptist and Pietism and, by 1900, also Wesleyan Holiness. By 1950s, more evangelism and less cultural distinctiveness (dress codes, etc.). Denominational 10 core values (see handout) fit Anabaptist values but are variously interpreted. BIC denomination is member of MCC and Mennonite World Conference.

BIC families Cober, Stump, Heisey, Mishler, Shirk, etc., arrived in Union Township in 1838 from Ontario, where they had moved to from Pennsylvania during the

Revolutionary War. Services held in Daniel Stump log house, then the Union Grove church building (both at intersection of CR 50 and 15), then Locke Township, now (since 1967) in Nappanee on SR 19.

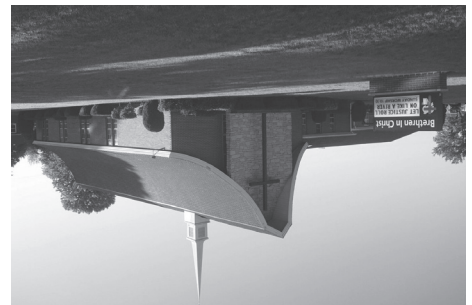
250 congregations in US - 109 Pennsylvania, 52 Florida, 16 California. Largest number of BIC churches are in Zambia and Zimbabwe. A second local church is on CR 11 in Locke Twp. Others in Garrett and Milltown, IN, and Cassopolis, MI

Earlier, Evangel Press and BIC general church offices were located in Nappanee, now in Grantham, PA, site of Messiah College, once affiliated with BIC. The BIC sponsors no seminary.

Former Union Grove BIC church building, the first frame BIC church (1887), at CRs 50/15 intersection, no longer owned by BIC.



The Nappanee Brethren in Christ church building.



Pastors and Librarians:

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

HISTORIANS
Michiana Anabaptist
Est. 1992
Helene Hoover, Membership
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