

Historical Committee

The text provided below was taken from a document developed by Pastor J. E. Lewis and the Historical Committee of the church. The format is not the best for display on the world-wide web, however, work is being done to provide a better document for this medium. Enjoy, and stay tuned for updates.

Acknowledgements

This Historical Sketch has been made possible through the untiring efforts of the Church Council secretaries and pastors. It is regrettable to note, however, that many years neither pastors nor the Church secretaries would have written about the events of the local church, thus there are many dark spots in the 150 years of the church's existence.

We are deeply indebted to Pastor William A. Groff, Jr. for his untiring efforts to research the available records and write in a chronological order the events of the past. There were several other persons who shared information of importance, which has contributed so much for the record of events of the local church.

Special thanks to Anna Brandt, Hannah Groff, Edna Wagner, Russel Hein, Henry Musser, Verna Kuntzleman and George Shuman.

The Historical Committee

Warren Nauman, Elizabeth Miller, Eugene Enck, Sara Forrey,

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Preface

The people of the world who are a part of the Church Universal have a distinct and common heritage in and through Jesus Christ. All those who belong to the local Church fellowship have a common bond as members of the Family of God.

The historical record of the local Churches provides evidence of faith, courage and love toward God and the fellow believers in Christ.

The sacrifices, which have been made, by the ministers and laymen have contributed so much to the blessings and conveniences of all who are now able to utilize the facilities of the Church.

The pioneers of Faith were on their own. It is so different now in the program of planting new Churches where money is made available to assist in the pastor's salary as well as gifts and loans from the Conference toward the construction of new Church buildings or the purchasing of available facilities.

In the early years of the Churches of God, the ministers were referred to as 'Elders'.

There was a distinction made between the ministers and those persons elected to serve as elders of the local congregation. The minister was identified as the 'Teaching Elder', the elected officer in the local congregation as a member of the Church council was recognized as the 'Ruling Elder'. The title 'Reverend' was used extensively from the beginning of the 19th century until the 60's and 70's of the 20th century, since that time the common title of the clergy is 'Pastor'.

The local church building was commonly referred to as 'Bethel' in the early years of our denomination, meaning 'A Worshiping Place'.

If there are corrections or additions, please write to the First Church of God, 144 S. Market Street, Elizabethtown, PA 17022.

J.E. Lewis

Chapter I

PRE-ORGANIZATIONAL YEARS

The history of the organization of every local Church has its own distinctive characteristics. The unique situation with the Elizabethtown First Church of God is that it took so long before it was

organized. There were eleven years, which elapsed from the time services were initiated until the Church was organized.

The human founder of the Churches of God, General Conference, Elder John Winebrenner, contributed so very much to the organization of this local congregation.

Mr. Winebrenner had been a pastor in the Salem German Reform Church in Harrisburg, PA, when he was locked out of his church building in 1825. This young pastor was a man with spiritual zeal and dedication to Christ. Infrequently, he would invite those with an evangelical persuasion to speak in his pulpit, a practice that was accepted by some and resented by others. One Sunday morning, he arrived at the church to find that the locks had been changed on the doors. It seems that word had gotten around among those who were not in favor of his ministry, but not to those who were faithful to him. Mr. Winebrenner did not give up in defeat but used the opportunity to conduct an outdoor service along the Susquehanna River. Elder Winebrenner was heralded by many for standing by his convictions in relationship to his evangelical zeal, but at the same time he was criticized through the news media and other means of communication for breaking away from the traditions of the German Reform Church.

Elder Winebrenner received many invitations to speak in various churches, camp meetings, halls and private homes. He considered each invitation as an opportunity that the Lord would have him assume.

One of the pastors of the day, who was especially sympathetic with Winebrenner's theological views and philosophy of Christian living, was a man by the name of John Elliot who later joined his own congregation from Lancaster with Winebrenner's.

There were many towns and communities, who had invited Mr. Winebrenner to speak; Elizabethtown was one of them. On his first visit to Elizabethtown, a committee composed of businessmen, farmers, and day laborers that identified themselves as 'progressive citizens' had made arrangements to meet with him. The meeting was held in Ober's Meeting House, which was two miles out of town. There was a good attendance at this meeting, but not everyone who attended was in agreement that evangelistic services should be held in the community. There were those in attendance who caused a disturbance. There were also those who, on the way to the meeting, were met along the roadside and harassed for attending. Married couples were divided on the matter. One of the reasons for this kind of reaction by the people was due to a report, which had been circulated that Mr. Winebrenner was one who 'possessed supernatural power'. Most of the people in attendance, however, were very favorable to the type of sermon given and extended an invitation for him to return. One lady compared him to the 'eloquent persuasiveness of D.L. Moody'.

From the year 1826 to 1837, many different evangelical pastors were invited to speak in the area with Mr. Winebrenner being one of their favorite speakers. In most cases these meetings were

held in private homes. Infrequently, schoolhouses or public halls would be made available for such meetings.

The local Lutheran pastor was so impressed with Mr. Winebrenner's dedication to the cause of Christ that he made his church available for services on occasion. There were members of Pastor Speck's church who were not at all in sympathy with this arrangement, however, and forced the floundering group to meet elsewhere. This led to such a protest on the part of a "Mr. May" that he left the Lutheran church though we have no record that he ever joined Winebrenner's struggling fellowship. This whole episode prompted Pastor Speck to preach a sermon to his congregation with the title, "Our Father Which Art In Heaven", at which time he stated that only Christians could call God their Father, but the wicked and the unconverted would with more propriety say, "Our father which art in hell".

A short time after this experience with the Lutherans, a local tavern owner and operator died. Since the business was closed and the building was not being used, arrangements were made to have services held in the former tavern. This resulted in a considerable amount of complaints by the former customers who claimed that the Christians had desecrated the tavern. Thus the search went on for a public place to worship.

A great amount of admiration must be given to the faithful few who were determined to stand by their God. The Bible studies and prayer meetings continued to be held in the homes of Michael Cramer and Robert Ross. Winebrenner was leading a Bible Study in the home of Mr. Ross when a lady of the community accepted Christ. Mr. Winebrenner was showing her the plan of salvation from the scriptures. This prompted such irritation in the heart of her son that he was going to stone Mr. Winebrenner, but he was persuaded not to throw the stone since it might hit his mother instead of the preacher.

There was a meeting held in the local school house one Sunday afternoon which was broken up when a live goose was thrown through one of the windows. It was at this point that the patience of the people began to wear thin. The leaders offered a reward to anyone who would report the leader of the group, which had been disturbing them so much. There was very little opposition to the public meetings thereafter.

Chapter II

ORGANIZATION OF THE NEW CHURCH

In 1837, the organization of the congregation finally took place and there was a petition made to the Local Eldership for a pastor. The first man to serve the congregation was Elder D. Maxwell, who stayed on the field one year. There had been a dispute about baptism. There were several people who desired to become charter members but did not think it necessary for them to be

immersed. Mr. Maxwell held to his own convictions that all persons had to be immersed before they could join the church. (This would have been a personal conviction on the part of the pastor since our denomination from the very outset did not make such a requirement. The one requirement to qualify for church membership then and now is for a person to have had a personal experience of salvation by accepting Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord of their lives. Baptism is not minimized by the church but looked upon as the answer of a good conscience. The symbolism of the burial and resurrection in the baptismal waters has great significance as it reminds us of the marvelous sacrifice of our Lord and the great victory He has claimed for all who believe.)

The charter members of the newly organized church at Elizabethtown were: Abraham Breneman, Michael Cramer, Mrs. Michael Cramer, Martha Kapp and Margaret Cramer. The Ruling Elder was Abraham Breneman and the Deacon was Michael Cramer.

One of the strange things to observe is the absence of the name of Robert Ross who had been so active and provided his home as a meeting place for such a long period of time. It could be that he would have been one of the group who did not conform to the demands which the pastor made for baptism by immersion.

Chapter III

A PEOPLE WITHOUT A BUILDING

Although the "Church" was organized in 1837 after eleven years of meetings in homes, schoolhouses and halls, they were still without a Church building. For six more years meetings were held in various buildings as they became available for the people to use.

There are two things which may have contributed to the instability of this new congregation; first, there was no regular meeting place and second, the frequency of pastoral changes.

During the 150 year history of the Elizabethtown Congregation, fifty different pastors have served the congregation with Elder Jacob Keller serving three different two year terms and Elder Carlton Price serving two, two year terms. The vast majority of the pastors would have served from one to three years.

There were three different pastors who served the people during the first six years after the organization of the congregation: Elder David Maxwell, Elder Jacob Keller, and Elder E.H. Thomas.

In 1840 there was a favorable change for growth. An evangelistic team involving Elder Jacob Keller, Elder E.H. Thomas and Elder Joseph Ross conducted a protracted revival, which lasted several weeks. There were many who sought salvation at the 'Mourner's Bench' and new life was evident among the people. It was during Elder Thomas' ministry that another great revival was conducted which resulted in several other revivals in the Elizabethtown area. An "Elder Tucker" had the opportunity of baptizing twelve believers in the Conoy Creek near the railroad station during one of these revivals.

New members were added to the congregation, which now made a total of forty. It was deemed advisable to elect three additional Ruling Elders to the Church Council: David Boyce, Abraham Andrews, and Fred Breneman.

The time had come to build the first church building.

Chapter IV

THE ELIZABETHTOWN CHURCH ON A CIRCUIT

There were three different occasions in the history of the Elizabethtown Church when it was a part of a circuit or charge.

The first reference is made in 1838 when it was merely noted that Elizabethtown was a part of the Lancaster County circuit.

In the year 1856, Elizabethtown and Bainbridge became a charge. This arrangement continued through 1867 with the following men serving as 'The Teaching Elders': Elder J. Hafleigh, Elder George Sigler, Elder A.H. Long, Elder Carlton Price, Elder J.S. Stamm, Elder E.H. Thomas, Elder Abraham Swartz, Elder W.O. Owen and Elder M. Oates.

In April of 1868 a great revival prevailed in Elizabethtown, which prompted the Council to request their own pastor. Elder Thomas Bean was appointed to serve full time, but this only lasted for one year.

The Elizabethtown Church and the Highspire Church became a charge in 1869 with Elder Bean serving the two churches for one year.

The two churches were together until 1895, when The Elizabethtown Church had their own pastor.

The pastors who served Elizabethtown and Highspire are as follows - Elder Thomas Bean, Elder J.W.Deshong, Elder J.S.Seabrooks, Elder J.W.Felix, Elder D.S. Shoop, Elder J.M. Speese, Elder

J.B. Lockwood, Elder S.B. Howard, Elder S.W. Naill, Elder F.Y. Weidenhamer, Elder J.T. Fleegal, Elder W.J. Grissinger, Elder F.W. McQuire, Elder H. Whitaker, and Elder O. E. Houston.

Chapter V

PASTORS ASSIGNED TO SERVE ELIZABETHTOWN

David Maxwell 1837-1838

Jacob Keller 1838-1840

E. H. Thomas 1840-1843

John Tucker 1843-1844

Joseph Bamberger 1844-1845

Thomas Strohm 1845-1847

David Kyle 1847-1848

Jacob Keller 1848-1850

Thomas Strohm 1850-1851

Carlton Price 1851-1852

Abraham Swartz 1852-1853

Jacob Keller 1853-1855

J. Hafleigh 1855-1857

George Sigler 1857-1859

A. H. Long 1859-1861

Carlton Price 1861-1863

J. S. Stamm 1863-1864

E. H. Thomas 1864-1865

Abraham Swartz 1865-1866

W. O. Owen 1866-1867

M. Oates 1867-1868

Thomas Bean 1868-1869

J. W. Deshong 1869-1872

J. C. Seabrooks 1872-1873

J. W. Felix 1873-1874

D. S. Shoop 1874-1877

J. M. Speese 1877-1879

J. B. Lockwood 1879-1880

S. B. Howard 1880-1882

S. W. Naill 1882-1884
F. Y. Weidenhamer 1884-1885
J. T. Fleegal 1885-1887
W. J. Grissinger 1887-1889
F. W. McQuire 1889-1891
H. Whitaker 1891-1894
O. E. Houston 1894-1898
G. W. Getz 1898-1902
C. I. Behney 1902-1905
G. R. Hoverter 1905-1915
H. F. Hoover 1915-1918
E. F. Yoder 1918-1928
Charles Fahl 1928-1930
C. H. Heiges 1930-1938
J. O. Weigle 1938-1954
W. H. Hower 1954-1964
W. A. Groff, Jr. 1964-1977
Harry C. Cole 1977-1981
William H. Reist 1981-1987
J. E. Lewis, Assoc. 1984-1989
Michael R. Nelson 1987-1998
Paul V. Burrus, Assoc. 1990-1992
Joseph N. Musser, Assoc. 1993-2002
Dr. Michael C. Walker 1998-2004

Chapter VI

THE CHURCH INVOLVED IN BUILDING AND PROPERTY

The first of three Church buildings was constructed in 1843 under the pastoral leadership of Elder John Tucker. This building was located on East High Street, formerly known as East

Manheim Street. The worship services were held in this sanctuary until April 30, 1853, when it was discovered by the congregation that they did not have the ownership rights. The land upon which the Church was built belonged to A. Breneman, and the deed had never been recorded. We do not know if this was "Abraham" Breneman, a member of the congregation, or someone else with the same first name initial. In any case, Mr. Breneman advertised and sold the property to the United Brethren people.

In the Church of God History, by C.H. Forney, the following is recorded on p. 93: "Special interest of the Bethel at Elizabethtown, Lancaster County, Pa. It was announced April 30, 1853, that the Church at said place having lost their meetinghouse has resolved on building another. The house was not destroyed, nor honestly lost. But with indomitable courage the church went forth to build a new house, which Elder Winebrenner pronounced an ornament to the town, and as handsome as any meeting-house in the East Pennsylvania Eldership."

The second Bethel was built on a lot at 144 S. Market Street. The construction was completed and the building was used for the first service Sunday, December 18, 1853.

Elder Winebrenner was invited to preach the dedication sermon. His text was Haggai 2:9, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of hosts."

The work of the Lord grew, with the Church of God now demanding the respect it deserved from the town people.

The Church did not always provide a parsonage for the pastor and family; we have on record three different locations, 40 E. Washington St. where Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Greiner now live, the deed referring to "Zion Bethel Church of God." This same name is used in the records of 1883 and 1886. In the year 1920, there were two properties purchased north of the Church. The brick house next to the church was renovated for \$800.00. This house, at 142 S. Market St. , served as the second parsonage until 1956 when a house at 414 Groff Avenue was purchased for the parsonage. The cost of this house was approximately \$25,000.00.

The church was renovated in 1888. The carpenters received 17 cents per hour and the painters received 16 cents per hour.

The first church bell was installed during the renovations with the instructions that it was not to weigh over 400 pounds. The cost involved for the work done on the church at this time was \$2545.83. Some modernization was deemed advisable in 1896, and electric lights were installed. The Church Council held meetings with the Electric Company and the Electric Company made a proposal to install twenty-three lights at a cost of \$35.00. They estimated the charges for a year to be \$28.83. This proposal was refused by the Church Council who offered to pay \$30.00 for the

installation of the lights and provide four men to help do the work, and \$20.00 for the first year of electrical service. The Electric Company agreed to the counter proposal.

The church in Elizabethtown purchased a house for the sexton and his family in 1899, but it wasn't until 1977 that a full time sexton was hired to work at the church.

The Church and the Sunday School continued to grow during the faithful service of the pastors who were assigned to Elizabethtown. Rev. George Hoverter started the building fund, which ultimately resulted in the construction of the present Sanctuary. A special offering was received in a regular Sunday morning service in the spring of 1913, which amounted to \$273.90.

A property was purchased south of the church in 1914 for \$1,500.00. It was later sold to the borough of Elizabethtown in 1937 when it was deemed necessary to extend Washington Street from Market to Poplar Street. The house was moved to the corner of Spruce and Arch Street. There is no record of the amount of money, which would have been transacted. The cement walks were laid along the south side of the church and in front of the sextons' house to Peach alley.

In 1915 action was taken to rebuild in order to accommodate the Sunday School and Church attendance. The members of the congregation enthusiastically gave to the building fund, which resulted in approximately one half of the cost of the building being on hand at the time the new structure was started. The cost of the building was \$43,000.00. It is interesting to note that by 1979 the estimated value of the stain glass windows alone was fixed at \$109,751.00.

Hoffer brothers served as the General Contractor. The loft in back of the pulpit was intended to be used for the choir. The Fire Marshall, however, determined that it was unsafe for the choir to be in the loft. Arrangements were then made for the choir to be on the main floor. Immediately back of the Pulpit is the baptistery.

The Building committee for the new structure was: Dr. H.F. Hoover, James Miles, Sr., C.E. Gross, R.K. Becker, A.G. Heisey, E.A. Fackler, F.T. Fornwalt, G.R. Breneman, and D.S. Witman.

Dr. W.H. Guyer, Preident of Findlay College, gave the dedication sermon.

The Sunday School and Church continued to grow under the leadership of Dr. E.F. Yoder which necessitated renovation of the basement to provide for the Primary department and an additional classroom. The cost was \$1,580.52.

The current Christian Education building is the result of the good plans and skill of the architect and the Building Committee, which was composed of Henry D. Kuntzelman, Harry S. Foreman, J. Landis Umberger, and Dr. Ralph Weirich, Jr.

The Finance Committee: Ben G. Hoffman, Harry S. Foreman, E.W. Keene, Henry W. Musser, George Shuman, J. Landis Umberger, Claude Breneman, Russel Hein, Charles Koser, Mahlon Patton, Wilbur Snyder, and David S. Witman.

The Memorial and Gift Committee: Wilbur Snyder, Mrs. Ben G. Hoffman, Mrs. Galen Brandt, Mrs. Franklin Spickler and George Shuman.

The Church Council was comprised of Elders Henry D. Kuntzelman, Amos Landis, Eugene Enck, Henry Musser, Charles Nauman, E.W. Keene, Claude Rutherford, and Harry S. Foreman.

Deacons- Dorsey Enck, Ben G. Hoffman, John Melhorn, Charles Metzler, Clifford Shank, George Shuman, J. Landis Umberger and Dr. Ralph Weirich, Jr.

The dedication of the Christian Education Building was Sunday, September 3, 1962. The speaker for the special occasion was Dr. O.J. Wilson, president of Findlay College. His subject was "We Build In Faith." Dr. Kenneth Boldosser, Superintendent of the East Pennsylvania Conference, had the dedication prayer, Dr. Roy Schreiner, Editor Emeritus of the Church Advocate, and Pastor Jack Parthemore, Editor of the Church Advocate, assisted in the service.

The cost of the building was \$193,150.00. The cost of furnishing the building was \$18,209.13.

A quote from the dedication booklet indicates the keen interest, which the people had, in this new facility.

"This is a day of rejoicing as we see the evidence of reality, of dream or vision of yesterdays. But we have not come to the finished task. The greater task is before us. God has permitted us to realize this facility, and as it is dedicated this day we must put our shoulder to the wheel and really teach God's Word, so that there will emanate from this place an influence that will stir the souls of men. We must let ourselves be the instruments through which God will speak to those about us. As we dedicate this building, let us dedicate our hearts anew to the Christ who alone can save men and women, boys and girls from the ways of sin."

One of the outstanding facilities which was provided was a modern kitchen which was the delight of Anna Brandt and her committee. There were many dollars raised through the untiring efforts of the kitchen committee.

Other provisions, which were made possible on the basement level, were three adult classrooms, which can be opened up for large assemblies, a stage, along with the Junior and Middler Departments.

The first floor facilities include a pastor's study, secretary office, lounge, crib room, nursery, kindergarten, primary departments and restrooms.

In 1969, new carpet was installed in the parsonage and the church was insulated at a total cost of \$2,350.00.

In 1973, the Keller property was purchased with the anticipation that it may become a part of some long range planning. By May 15, 1974 the congregation in their annual meeting determined to sell the property for \$24,000.00.

The Sheaffer property, North of the Church and in front of the new Christian Education Building, was torn down. There was extensive landscaping done in front of the new facility.

A new sound system was installed in 1983 at a cost of \$6,285.30. The congregation had an ingathering of funds toward this P.A. system on a Sunday morning. There was an income of \$5,014.00.

The cost involved to maintain and improve the church property seems to be astronomical at times. In the mid 60' s it was necessary to repoint the brick at a cost of \$10,000.00. In 1983 a new roof on the Christian Ed Building and related repairs amounted to \$11,800.00. New pavement was laid around the church, which included curbing at a cost of \$12,139.00, and storm windows were installed at a cost of \$5,195.00.

Parking had become a big problem, as in the case with most downtown churches. In January of 1986 there was a special Congregational meeting to discuss the possibility of purchasing the Black Horse Hotel, which had been placed on the market to be sold. After lengthy discussion, it was voted to purchase this property to be used for parking. The estimated cost to purchase the hotel, demolish it and pave for the parking facilities was \$115,000.00

David Newcomer met with Borough Council about the possibility of closing the alley north of the Christian Education Building. The Borough made a proposal to move the entrance to the

middle of the lot, allow cars to come off of Market Street, but not to exit on to Market Street; then to provide for diagonal parking to accommodate more cars. The proposal was readily accepted.

A proposal was made to the congregation to pay for the parking facility over a five-year period. In the course of approximately fourteen months, \$45,000.00 had already been paid.

The office equipment had become obsolete and outmoded by the early 1980's. It was determined by the Administrative Council to upgrade this equipment. A 'Supertype Olympia', and Toshiba BD5511 copy machine were purchased for approximately \$4,000.00. One of the families of the church donated an IBM computer to the church for the office.

Additional equipment in the office is a folding machine and an address machine.

There were seven doors installed on the Christian Education Building in 1987 at a cost of \$6534.

It was also necessary to have the old asbestos removed from different locations in the church and new installation installed at a cost of \$8,400.00.

A point of interest concerning property in the early years of the church was their ownership of a cemetery lot. The janitor received \$1.00 a year for keeping the grass mowed.

There were different people who would have expressed concern for a ramp to be built from Market Street to the main entrance of the Christian Education Building. Mr. Henry Kuntzelman was one person who promoted this need. It was not until after Mr. Kuntzelman's death that this became a reality. Money had been left to the church in his will. After consultation with Mrs. Kuntzelman it was deemed appropriate to use this money toward the ramp. Since that time there has been deep expressions of gratitude for this convenience.

Chapter VII

PASTORS INVOLVED IN SERVICE

The key person from various records, who was responsible for the organization of the Elizabethtown Church of God was Elder John Winebrenner.

Elder David Maxwell served as the first appointed pastor of the Church. His term of service was for one year, but it was not unusual during this era for pastors to serve very short terms. One is led to believe that Mr. Maxwell may have contributed to his short ministry here since he had created a problem when it came time to receive charter members into the Church fellowship. He maintained that a person had to be baptized by immersion before they could be a member of the local congregation.

In 1838, Elder Jacob Keller became the second pastor to serve Elizabethtown, which was a part of the Lancaster County Circuit; and in April 1840, Elders E.H. Thomas and Jacob Keller served together. It was during 1840 that revival services were held in a brick schoolhouse with great success. There were several people added to the Church. Mr. Thomas was assigned to serve this church in 1840.

The next two men to be appointed were Elders John Tucker and Joseph Bamberger. These men served one year each.

There is no record of events recorded at all between 1840 and 1848. It was during 1848 under the pastoral leadership of Elder Jacob Keller, that the first house of worship, called "Bethel" was built. There were forty members at this time.

Forty years passed by with twenty-five different pastors appointed either for the first time or reappointed as pastors.

During the time that Elder W.J. Grissinger served as pastor, the church building underwent necessary remodeling work.

In the year 1897, Elder O.E. Houston reported to the Church Council that the office work had become quite heavy and asked for help. The Council did not comply with his request.

The pastor received \$150.00 from the Elizabethtown Church. One year later there must have been a special appreciation for the pastor as a figure of \$500.00 was set, but only \$400.00 was raised.

In the year 1905 Rev. George Hoverter was appointed to serve the church. This was the beginning of a new era in relationship to longevity of service. Mr. Hoverter served for ten years. He was an excellent pastor in that he called faithfully in the homes and hospitals. Even though in his later years of service, automobiles were more prevalent, he never owned a car. He would

either walk or use the trolley car. It was Mr. Hoverter who was largely responsible for the men's work in the church to become a vital part of his ministry. On a Sunday morning in 1913, Mr. Hoverter brought to the attention of the Men's Bible Class the need for more space. A special offering was received for that purpose, but Mr. Hoverter did not stay in the church long enough to see the new building constructed.

Dr. H.F. Hoover was appointed to serve the church in 1915. He stayed only during the building program. His peers knew Mr. Hoover as a very excellent scholar of the scriptures with an outstanding mind for memorization. It was reported that he had committed to memory the entire New Testament.

The ministry of Rev. E.F. Yoder, like that of Mr. Hoverter, was for ten years. Mr. Yoder has the record for seeing the greatest growth in the church during his ministry than any other single pastor who had ever served.

The final year of Mr. Yoder's services in Elizabethtown proved to be one of the better years.

Mr. Yoder was more diligent in keeping records than any of those who had served before him, and many who have served since.

He would periodically write articles for the Church Advocate. When he would meet members on the street to talk with them, he would make a note of it for his own records. One of the reports, which he submitted, is as follows:

"The Church experienced a gracious revival in 1928. The evidence of the revival was manifest. There had been a larger ingathering of souls in 1924, but this year there was a more genuine revival. In 1924 there were 62 professed conversions, 63 baptisms, and 69 who fellowshiped with the

Church. This year there have been 32 professed conversions, 33 baptisms, and 37 fellowshiped with the Church."

Following the ten years of service of Mr. Yoder, who resigned to assume the pastoral leadership in Lancaster, the spirit of revivalism and renewal continued for a short time under the leadership of Charles Fahl.

The Church experienced one of the most devastating things that can happen to a local congregation in 1930.

Mr. Fahl left the Church of God and took approximately one hundred of the Church of God members to start what was to become Mt. Calvary Independent Church.

The division came about over the Fundamentalist controversy, which was prevalent during this time in the history of the Church.

Although the people who remained were greatly distressed, they were not defeated. A great amount

of prayer and faith prevailed and many of the wounds were healed.

The Eldership was extremely sensitive to the situation and was very cautious about the appointment of a new pastor. Rev. C.H. Heiges was selected to serve and he did it with great perseverance and Christian love. He involved the people in many different ways. He strengthened their faith with biblical sermons. As the people became more and more restored from a spiritual standpoint, they were challenged to become involved in the Church building. Volunteer work was sought, people responded, and the bond of fellowship grew stronger. Although a great effort was put forth to restore the Men's Bible Class to its former number, it proved to be a laborious task.

There are moments in the life of every minister, which may appear to be very somber at the time but a bit amusing later on. Such was the case on a Sunday morning when Mr. Heiges was preaching on the subject 'Heaven and Hell'. "Is there anyone here this morning who wants to go to hell?" he shouted. One young man responded, "I sure don't want to go to hell." That response marked the end of the sermon and the service. As the people were marching out so many could not contain themselves, but there was one man who did not think it was a laughing matter. Mr. Heiges shook hands with Lee Hassinger, saying, "Lee, if you have in mind what I think you do to discipline your son, please do not do it. You see I asked a very simple, yet important question and your son was the only one brave enough to respond." We are told that Bob Hassinger became a fast friend of the pastor from that time forth.

Mr. Heiges was a great lover of pipe organ music. In 1937 he challenged the congregation to install the three manual Estey organ. It was dedicated in 1938.

Rev. J.O. Weigle became the pastor in 1938 and he served the church for 17 years, resigning in 1954 due to ill health.

Mr. Weigle was perhaps one of the most zealous evangelistic preachers in the Eldership at this time. He would conduct services for ~ different Churches, some of them in other denominations.

During one of Pastor Weigle's sermons on a Sunday morning in an effort to get his point across he came down hard on the pulpit with his fist. Mrs. Ruth Heigle and her children were in the front of the Church, one of her daughters grabbed her arm and said, "Is he mad now mommy, is he mad?"

These were difficult years for families and the country, many sons and daughters were called into the service of our country. He served the families well and especially the five families whose sons were killed in action.

One of the members in his advanced years has the highest praise for Mr. Weigle, "had it not been for his prayers when I was at the point of death, I would never have made it."

Pastor and Mrs. Hower moved into the parsonage at 140 S. Market Street in 1954. The parsonage was moved to 414 Groff Avenue in 1956. Pastor Hower was so proud of this new parsonage that he would talk about it to anyone in the Eldership who would listen to him.

It was during the ministry of Pastor Hower that the Christian Education Building was constructed.

During the time of ministry, which Mr. Hower served in Elizabethtown, he was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity from Findlay College.

Pastor William Groff assumed the pastoral responsibilities in Elizabethtown on October 1, 1964. During his term of thirteen years service at Elizabethtown, the Church Council was reorganized to conform to the recommendations of the Conference. Whereas, the Council had been comprised of Elders and Deacons, the Administrative Council was composed of three Commissions: Worship and Outreach, Stewardship and Maintenance, and Christian Education. There is also the Finance Committee.

Mr. Groff was supportive of the county C.G.Y.A., the Church Camp program, and served as well in the total program of the Conference.

A resource library was set up for the Christian Education program of the church.

Mr. Groff was most successful in the presentations of monologues. His leadership had contributed to the marvelous success of the presentation of a special Christmas program in 1970 entitled "The Christmas Light". There were 600 in attendance.

Pastor Groff was the host pastor of the East Pennsylvania Conference when part of the ceiling in the sanctuary fell, which necessitated the move to a neighboring church to finish the business.

The membership had reached its highest in 1973 with a total of 501.

There were several months during the interim between Pastor Groff leaving and the arrival of Pastor Harry Cole in the fall of 1977. Pastor Cole served the church for four years, leaving in 1981.

A program of tape ministry was carried out from the outset of these four years of ministry. This has proven to be very helpful to the shut-ins.

Mr. Cole was very much involved with the Youth Camp Program and likewise shared his skills of working with youth in the local setting. The number of youth from the local Church who attended Camp increased during these years.

The Camp ministry continued to be a service of top priority. After serving for 18 years, Mr. Cole received a citation from the Camp Board for his faithful service as a director.

One of the outstanding services conducted by Pastor Cole was the recognition of those persons who had been a member of the congregation for fifty years and more. This recognition was given at one of the Anniversary services of the Church.

Pastor William Reist was appointed to serve this congregation in 1981; he resigned in March of 1987 to become the second Administrator of the General Conference.

Early in the ministry of Pastor Reist the Administrative Council established goals to cultivate Church growth.

The following goals were adopted:

That the Church see a steady flow of new people and non-attendees coming into the Church
(Assigned to Worship and Outreach Commission)

That the Church deals some of the needs of the community. (Assigned to Worship and Outreach Commission).

That we have active committed youth in the Church. (Assigned to Christian Education Commission)

That we have strong, healthy Christian Families. (Assigned to Christian Education Commission)

That we provide meaningful Worship experiences for members and visitors. (Assigned to Worship and Outreach Commission)

That we have a broader base of leaders in the Church. (Assigned to Stewardship and Maintenance Commission)

That we be knowledgeable doers of the Word. (Assigned to Christian Education Commission)

One of the programs, which was in keeping with these goals, was the use of the Bethel Series. The pastor was sent to Wisconsin for a ten-day training period. Upon his return there was a solicitation of people who would take a two-year intensive study of the Bible. These persons then taught the volunteers who met one night during the week. This proved to be one of the more meaningful programs of bible study for the church. There were 84 members of the congregation who responded to this special training.

Pastor Reist initiated a program to involve another staff person as Minister of Visitation. During November of 1983, at a special congregational meeting, action was taken to hire Pastor J.E. Lewis to serve in this capacity. His service began January 1, 1984.

Pastor Lewis had retired from full time service on December 31, 1983 after having served for 41 years in the East Pennsylvania Conference and 2 years as a student pastor in Ohio. The offices served during his ministry were Trustee of Findlay College; Trustee of Winebrenner Seminary; Trustee of the Carlisle Church Home; Church Camp for 25 years; Commission on World Missions 12 years, served as Chairman for 9 years; and several other Commissions and Boards on the Local and General Conference level.

There was a special service in our church on August 3, 1986, which had been arranged jointly between the pastor and the family of Mr. and Mrs. George Floyd. The family brought their parents to the morning worship service where they observed their 70th Wedding Anniversary.

In 1985, the Commission on Worship and Outreach, at the suggestion of Pastor Reist, made a recommendation to the Administrative Council to provide two morning Worship services. This resulted in an average increase of those in Worship of 13%. The Sunday School realized an increase of 10% during the first year.

Upon the resignation of Pastor Reist, a special Recognition service was held for services rendered by himself and his wife Judy.

The following resolution of appreciation was read, and given to them in a frame, which had been provided by David Rittenhouse. The resolution is as follows:

Whereas, Pastor William Reist, having been appointed

to serve the First Church of God in

Elizabethtown, PA, by the East Pennsylvania

Conference, September 1, 1981,

Whereas, Pastor Reist has resigned from his responsibilities as the pastor from Elizabethtown First Church of God, as of March 15, 1987, having been called of the Lord, with the unanimous approval of The General Conference Administrative Council,

Whereas, he has given yeoman service as a Biblically oriented preacher, providing outstanding leadership in Administration, distinguished himself in programming, unselfishly giving himself in wholesome Christian counseling, and maintained an excellent rapport with the individuals of this congregation,

Whereas, Pastor Reist has served the community well, having established himself as a leader of the clergy, promoting many and various community projects,

Whereas, Pastor Reist is extremely interested in the total program of the Church local, the East Pennsylvania Conference and the General Conference of the Church of God,

Whereas, he envisions growth in the total Church, the Local Congregation, the Local Conference and the General Conference,

Be it resolved, that we, the members of this congregation petition our Lord Jesus Christ for him to be as wise as Solomon, as strong as Samson and as diligent as Paul, as he begins his role as General Conference Administrator,

Be it further resolved, that Pastor Reist, his wife Judy, and their sons Jonathon and Benjamin will adjust well in their new community and home,

Be it further resolved, that a copy of this resolution appeared in the Administrative Council minutes of the Elizabethtown First Church of God.

Signed

Elizabeth Miller, President

Emma Shank, Secretary

Administrative Council

Pastor Michael Nelson was appointed to serve the Elizabethtown congregation on July 1, 1987. Since his term of service has been so short at the point of this writing, we simply desire to share with you a bit of the background of Pastor Nelson.

Mr. Nelson was born and raised in Ida Grove, Iowa. He attended the University of Iowa for two years and transferred to Northwestern College in Iowa where he concentrated on the subjects of Religion and Sociology. In the year 1983, he graduated from Winebrenner Theological Seminary with Master of Divinity degree and the scholastic honor of Magna Cum Laude.

The preaching assignment, which he had in Ohio, was at the Ohio City Church of God. He also served on a part-time basis as Professor at Winebrenner Seminary 1984-1986.

Pastor Nelson and Patricia Bouwman met in college and were married during term break. Patricia had been employed as a Social Service Worker and L.P.N.

There are three children; Amber, Aimee and Aaron.

Pastor Nelson had been involved on several Committees and Commissions in the Ohio Conference including the Commission on Ministerial Ordination and Guidance.

Mr. Nelson was active in the Church Camp program in the Ohio Conference.

A special service of Installation was held for Pastor Nelson July 12, 1987 at 4:00 p.m. The weather was extremely hot which greatly affected the attendance. Pastor Nelson's parents from Iowa came in for the occasion.

The Conference Superintendent, Dr. Gail Dunn, had the Installation sermon and ceremony. There were two members of the Commission on Church and Pastoral Guidance who assisted Dr. Charles Lacquement offered the prayer and Robert Enck read the scripture.

A very fine time of fellowship and refreshments was enjoyed by all following the service.

Chapter VIII

OUR TRIBUTE TO VETERANS

War and sacrifice go together and what a price the Church and Sunday School paid for the freedom of our country during World War II!

There were five young men who made the supreme sacrifice for the freedom of our country:

Frederick Barley

John A. Felker

John H. Espenshade

Henry S. Musser

Harold E. Witmer

The others who served faithfully, many of them for several years, are as follows:

J. Robert Breneman Christian E. Coble

George Breneman Harold J. Cover

John Becker Opal Ruth Coble

Robert H. Becker Harold Doolittle

Claud Becker Floyd Doolittle

Stanley Barnhart Raymond Deitrich

Clyde Barnhart Claud Daveler

Robert Barnhart Lester E. Ebersole

William Barnhart John E. Eppler

William Browning Earl R. Eshelman

Joe V. Brown James Flowers

Mildred Brown Clarence Greiner

John N. Buch Henry M. Garber

Robert C. Coble Allen N. Gainer

William Cunningham Joseph Groff

Willis Collins J. M. Garber

Joe M. Garber Richard Musser

J. Hoffman Garber George H. Nauman

Robert D. Gish James Ney

Earl R. Greiner Russell Neff

Floyd H. Gottschall Carles H. Osborne

William J. Gottschall Richard D. Painter

Clyde Gantz Arthur M. Painter

Paul H. Gish Franklin Peters

Ralph B. Greiner Jay R. Peters

Jay A. Hertzler Cyrus R. Peters

Paul Horner James D. Peters

Gish Hoffman Edwin D. Ruhl

Sara Hertzler Carles Reed

William C. Hippensteel Kenneth Strominger

Robert L. Hassinger Kermit Strominger

Wilbur Hornafus, Jr. Ralph Snyder

Lee Hippensteel Marvin Shaud

Dean E. Koppenhaver Lloyd R. Seiders

John H. Koppenhaver Richard Seiders

Clarence Kipp Frank M. Shank

Lloyd E. Kendig Lester M. Shaak

Robert Keller Norman Shank

Amos O. Keener Clifford E. Shank

Edwin W. Keene Herman W. Slesser

Carl E. Koser Willard G. Stauffer

Robert Lindemuth Robert Snyder

Jonathan E. Loser Sheldon A. Stump

Russell Miller Robert E. Shank

Charles F. Metzler George W. Shuman

Earl Spickler Henry F. Weiss

Howard B. Sheaffer, Jr. Leroy E. Whittle

Robert Singer George Wagner

Robert Smith Amos Hertzler

Loy L. Trostle Clarence Heagy

George M. Weigle Frank Ebersole

The veterans of the Korean and Viet Nam wars deserve our highest praise and adulation for serving in such a noble fashion. The sacrifices and deprivations they encountered were far more devastating than we can ever imagine.

Unfortunately, there was evident neglect by our society as a whole to show appreciation for their service on behalf of our country.

We are sorry to admit that there was no record kept of the personnel from our Sunday School and Church who served in these two different encounters of war.

Chapter IX

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

The Sunday School of the Elizabethtown Church of God was first organized September 15, 1844. The first three months there was an average attendance of 35 per Sunday. Although there is no recorded evidence of the Sunday School's growth from 1844 until the appointment of Rev. Hoverter in 1905, there would have been a strong base of operation for the growth to take place in the early 1900's.

The Men's Bible Class was organized in 1909; by 1914, under the teaching of Rev. Hoverter, the membership had grown to 128 with an average attendance per Sunday of 65. The class was in existence for over 50 years; during this period of time an annual anniversary was observed. The Anniversary service speakers came from a variety of walks of life. One of the special programs the Men's Class sponsored was the "Welcome Home" banquet in 1946 of the service personnel. There were 150 in attendance. Dr. William Jackson from the New Cumberland Church was the guest speaker.

The class was interested in Local Option, and on one occasion wrote a letter to Gov. M.G. Brumbaugh commending him for his stand against the sale of alcohol.

The Men's Class assumed the responsibility of raising money toward a new church building in 1913. This same class started a fund for the new pipe organ.

In most instances the pastor was the teacher of the Men's Class. In 1940, Professor H.S. Brinser became the teacher. Professor Brinser was a retired instructor from Findlay College.

There was a young men's Bible class taught by Jesse Atkins for 37 years.

There is a record of the Willing Worker's class being taught by Brother Fornwalt. This class was organized May 13, 1913, under the pastoral leadership of Rev. Hoverter. By 1915 the membership grew to 68.

A new era dawned when many churches and denominations made in-depth studies on teaching methods and facilities, which would provide for separate departments and individual class-room space for the adults.

For many years, separate classes were provided for women of different ages and by-and-large there were two classes provided for men.

There were co-ed classes organized just after World War II, which brought about an end to the separate men and women classes.

The Sunday School had become the right arm of the church in so many different instances. Many of the children and adults who studied the Word of God, thus learning the way of salvation, became members of the church.

The Sunday School in the Elizabethtown Church at one point had as many as 500 in attendance on a given Sunday morning. When Rally Days were held each year it was not uncommon to have as many as 600 present.

The 1986 average attendance was 134.

Chapter X

AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

The Pastors who served the congregation previous to Rev. E.F. Yoder had given much of their time and leadership to men's work. Pastor Yoder provided a broader base of interest for the total church.

There was a Missionary Society organized, with the first public meeting held December 27, 1920. The Mission services, the frequency of the meetings not recorded, would provide a variety of programs including missionaries from India when they were on furlough.

The Ladies Aid was organized and regular meetings held by the women. There were offerings at each of the meetings and they would also have done various things to accumulate money for the benefit of the parsonage in particular.

Christian Endeavor was organized with the children meeting each Sunday evening. The adult leadership was outstanding as this proved to be very viable for a number of years.

Mr. Yoder introduced Vacation Bible School program. There was marvelous response from the adults and the attendance of the children and young people reached an all time high of 164 during the 1920s.

The Christian Endeavor gave way later on to the Conference program of C.G.Y.A. (Church of God Youth Advance). Regular meetings were held in the church, and countywide meetings became very popular. It was not unusual for the county meetings to have as many as 300 in attendance. The Conference provided Rallies, which was very popular for many years.

The Men's Fellowship was organized under the pastoral ministry of William Groff in 1966.

This Fellowship continues to be active. Mr. Claude Rutherford has served as Host from the inception of the program, serving coffee, doughnuts and toast.

The program for the Fellowship comprises of discussion on different subjects, book reviews and on some occasions papers have been presented.

The average attendance is 14.

The WCSC (Women's Christian Service Council), was organized in the local church November 15, 1954. The first president was Mrs. Henry Kuntzelman; she served in this capacity for five years. Mrs. William Hower then served for an equal number of years as president. It was during the time that Mrs. Charles Metzler served as president that the "Keep-Sake Cook Book" was published.

There were many projects, which the WCSC assumed. There was a keen interest in others. The missionaries overseas, the service men, and college students were remembered in different ways.

The East Pennsylvania Conference promoted the 'Grandparent' program at the Church Home in Carlisle. The local WCSC has continued with the program through the years.

There were special provisions made for the home-bound people of the church at Christmas and Thanksgiving.

In 1978, the ladies sponsored one of the larger Mother and Daughter banquets with 180 in attendance.

The needs for cancer pads prompted the ladies to organize a sewing group.

Thank Offering services were held at which time Thank Offering Banks which the women had in their homes were brought to this service. The local ladies contributed a large amount of money over the years, which have benefited the East Pennsylvania and General Conference interests.

There was a reorganization of the Women's Work in 1983 with Mrs. Ben Ebersole and Mrs. J. Landis Umberger serving as co-chairpersons of seven different circles; namely, WCSC, Prayer, Bible

Study, Mothers, Craft, Banner, and for a couple of years a Food circle.

Mrs. Kuntzelman had provided the material and did the needlework to make a set of Paraments for the Pulpit and Communion table.

Chapter XI

THE CHURCH AND HER MUSICAL INVOLVEMENT

Music is so very much a part of the people at worship. Early reference is made to the election of the organist in the Elizabethtown congregation. At one point in time there were five candidates for the job. We assume at that time there would have been a small pump organ and later a piano.

When Dr. C.H. Heiges was pastor of the church he encouraged the congregation to buy a pipe organ. His dream became a reality in 1936 when a new Estey three manual pipe organ was installed. The dedication of this fine instrument was May 9, 1937. There were special services each evening through Friday.

Rev. J.L. Updegraph of the West Pennsylvania Conference was the speaker for the dedication; Mr. George Pinkerton was the guest organist. Monday evening featured Dr. E.F. Yoder as speaker with Grace Boltz at the console.

Tuesday evening was advertised as an anniversary service with the Friendship Sunday School class in charge; Violet Cassel was the organist.

Wednesday evening Mr. George B. Rogers from the Lancaster St. James Episcopal church provided an organ recital.

Thursday evening the former pastor Rev. George Hoverter was the speaker with the organist Grace Boltz playing.

Friday evening there was a sacred concert by the combined choirs from the New Cumberland and Highspire Church choirs.

There is no record, which indicates the cost of the organ; there are members of the congregation who believe the cost was around \$10,000.00. The organ proved to be a very expensive piece of equipment for the congregation the first couple of years, because extensive work needed to be done which was not covered by the guarantee. One of the members reported that she made a contribution on dedication day, which amounted to two weeks wages. Anna, Edna and Ralph Wagoner donated the organ chimes.

The organ was rebuilt and repaired in 1972 at a cost of \$28,000.00.

The replacement costs for the organ today, determined by the Gundling Organ Company in Lancaster is \$120,700.00.

The Elizabethtown church has been blessed through the years with the Adult, Youth and Children's choirs. At the current time there is no active Youth choir.

For several years there was a Men's Chorus. Miss Anna Miles who later accompanied the chorus had organized the Men's Chorus. At one point, Mr. Clifford Schmidt, who was director of the Adult Choir, also assumed the roll of director of the Men's Chorus and choir director of the St. Marks United Methodist Choir in Mt. Joy. The two Church choirs would sing together at Evangelistic services and any other special program when they were invited. There were 23 men in the Church of God Chorus.

The Church organist provides such a vital service for the worship services; Grace Boltz was the first organist and served for several years. The person who served the longest, and so very faithfully through the years, was Susan Bretz. Susan started to play the organ in 1944 and retired June 28, 1987. A special recognition service was conducted for Susan, a lunch was served at the church, and she was presented with a gift for the faithful service performed.

Judy Reist served as Choir Directress during the time the Reist family occupied the parsonage at Elizabethtown. When they resigned to move to Findlay in the spring of 1987, it was necessary to secure the services for both the organist and director of the choir.

Mr. John Huber was hired to fill the organist position and Miss Lisa Bilheimer was hired to become the directress of the choir.

The Adult Choir is honored each year the last Sunday in June. On June 28, 1987 the congregation read the following Resolution of Appreciation:

Whereas, in the providence of Almighty God singing and the instruments of music were ordained by our Creator to express our souls deep needs and the inspiration to serve Him more faithfully,

Whereas, The First Church of God in Elizabethtown is richly blessed to have volunteers to serve in the choir, using their talents to honor our Lord through the singing of anthems and spiritual songs,

Whereas, we have been favored to have a talented organist who cooperates to the fullest as he accompanies the choir and jointly shares with the pastor for orderly worship,

Whereas, we have a choir directress who is sensitive to the needs and the wishes of the congregation in providing quality music for our worship,

Be it resolved, that we, the members of this congregation, express our deep and sincere appreciation to all who serve so faithfully through the medium of music in our Church, and this expression of gratitude be preserved for our posterity by becoming a part of the Historical Sketch of the church for the 150th Anniversary, September 20, 1987.

And Be it further resolved, that the names of the choir members, the directress and organist become a part of this historical record.

The Choir members:

Sopranos - Miriam Floyd, Rhoda Risser, Marti

Brandt, Kathryn Eyer, Barbara Wood, Beverly Lachat, Alma Shank.

Alcos - Patricia Hoffman, Mary Jane' Brandt,

Eva Good, Carolyn Barron, Carol Roaten.

Base - Laverne Eyer, Ben H. Hoffman, Richard

Myers, Larry Barron.

Tenor - Gerald Nellenbaugh, John Hertzler,

George Shuman, Jim Long.

The Children's Choir Directress - Carol Roaten.

Members of the Children's Choir: Peter Borg, Hunter

Shearer, Desere Lowy, Holly Ebersole, Jill Murphy,

Kelly Shambaugh, Raymond Husband, Micael Dietrich,

Dustin Shambaugh, Hope Edye, Joan Murphy.

Chapter XII

THE OUTREACH OF THE CHURCH

It has been observed by many that the strength of the local Church may be measured by the influence it has on those outside the Church.

The Elizabethtown Church has contributed much to others by the individual contributions our members have made to various causes for Christ.

The first member of the church who answered the call of Christ to go into full time Christian Service was Aaron Myers. Mr. Myers graduated from Findlay College in 1911, and sailed for India in 1912. He served as a missionary for 28 years. After his first six years of service he married Miss Louisa C. Dermott, a native of England. The Myers' had two sons, John and Samuel. In 1940, they moved back to America, locating in Findlay, Ohio, where Mr. Myers worked in a defense factory during the war. Following his service in this factory, he and Mrs. Myers served as janitors of College First Church in Findlay.

A young lady of the congregation, Miss Mildred Hossler graduated from Findlay College in 1947. She was appointed to serve in India by the Board of Missions in 1948. The assignment, which she assumed on the field, was to teach American children in the Darjeeling Methodist School for Missionary Children. Miss Hossler had to return home after serving for one term of four years due to ill health.

The congregation did not only provide personnel for mission work, but also provided financial support for other missionaries who served. Miss Leah Becker was one of the persons who received support from the Church. Miss Becker served in India for twenty-two years. Her first assignment as a missionary was made by the Missionary Alliance denomination. For reasons not noted, she joined the Mt. Joy Church of God and was then sent out by our Denominational Mission Board.

Miss Becker made available to the Elizabethtown Church a cabinet full of ornaments and mementoes, which are displayed, in the Church lounge.

Miss Minnie Lehman was assigned to work in India by the Mission Board in 1921. She was converted at and fellowshipped with the Linglestown Church of God. At the age of twenty-three she entered Findlay College. Miss Lehman's service as a missionary involved working with the Bible Women, women of the community and children. She contracted malaria, which necessitated her coming back home to America.

In 1937, she married David Witman of the Elizabethtown church and was very active, along with her husband, in the local congregational life.

The Church has served in many other ways by sending forth workers into various types of Christian service:

There were two young men from the congregation who prepared for the ministry; Barry Stahl had graduated from Elizabethtown College and Winebrenner Seminary. He had served one summer as an assistant to Pastor William Groff during his school days. Mr. Stahl was appointed to serve the Landisville Church where he served faithfully until he went into full time chaplain service ministering to the aged in retirement homes in Lancaster County.

Edward Brandt of this congregation attended Findlay College. While in College he was a student pastor in Ohio. Mr. Brandt attended Princeton Theological Seminary, and after graduation he was appointed to the Newport Church of God. He later transferred to the Presbyterian Church.

In 1898 the Church Council had recommended to the Eldership that David R. Herr be licensed to preach in the Eldership. There was no further record about Mr. Herr. We assume that the Board of the Eldership did not accept him.

Our Conference is very much interested in a program of Church Planting. There were two families from the Elizabethtown Church who were interested in the establishment of a church in Lititz. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Koser and Mr. and Mrs. Carl Koser and family became charter members of the Lititz First Church of God.

Home Mission work was also a part of the interest of the Church. Mr. and Mrs. Earl Kreiner, who had lived in Columbia and attended the Elizabethtown Church, had a deep interest in the North West Mountain Mission work in Idaho. This family received support during the time of their work in Idaho. This Mission work did not last very long due to extreme hardship, and when the Mission Station closed, the Kreiners moved to the west coast.

There were five children in the Kreiner family. Anna Brandt and Hanna Groff made clothes for them, and Russell Hein provided shoes for the family during the time they resided in Idaho and for a period of time after they moved to the west coast.

Mary K. Greiner attended Findlay College, majoring in Christian Education. She served for a period of time as a Christian Education Director in the New Cumberland Church and later went into Public School teaching.

Ms. Greiner made a profound contribution to the Camp program at Doubling Gap and was active for several years as a resource person to the Conference.

David Greiner was a mechanic in one of the local garages. He and his wife responded to the need to serve as Superintendent of property and grounds at Doubling Gap. Mary, his wife, served as secretary of the camp work for several years. Both served the camp well in many different ways.

The Doubling Gap Camp grounds, which were purchased in 1947, commanded a high priority of interest by many people of the Elizabethtown Church.

The building, which had been used as a 'Health Resort' for many years, commanded the respect and attendance of many well-to-do people from Philadelphia and New York, to mention only two cities. John Wanamaker from Philadelphia was a frequent visitor. Doubling Gap was known as a health resort because of five different springs of water, each having a different chemical content.

The facility was closed in the 1920's. The building was in an extreme run-down condition. It had gas fixtures for lighting, except in the caretaker's apartment, which was wired for electric.

The men of this church contributed much toward refurbishing the building.

Mr. Kuntzelman visited various churches to solicit volunteers to paint and do carpentry work. The Church's interest did not stop with the volunteer service. In 1947 there was also provided 100 rockers, which were placed on the massive porch, and just a couple of years later, the Church, provided upholstered furniture for the lobby.

Another area of service in the interest of Home and Foreign Missions was the dedicated efforts of Mrs. Henry Musser who served for 15 years on the Mission Board, later known as the Commission on World Missions. She was secretary of the Commission for several years, and visited three different countries where we have mission work; India, Bangladesh and Haiti, at her own expense.

The Church of God Home commanded the highest respect of the Elizabethtown Church. Two men, Harry Foreman and Henry Kuntzelman, served on the Home Board for a number of years.

During one of the business meetings when it was made known to the Board that there was a need for a typewriter, Mr. Foreman said to Joe Lehman of the Lancaster Church, "Joe, you and I are going to buy that typewriter." And buy it they did.

The Church provided on-the-job training for young men who were assigned to the Church by the Commission on Ministerial Training and Ordination: Barry Stahl, Terry Hamond, Jonathon Terry, Douglas Nolt, Dennis Andrew.

In 1972 the Church Council voted to allow the Well Baby Clinic to be held in the church twice a month. The Clinic is currently being held once a month with as many as 82 children receiving treatment. This has proved to be a real blessing for so many families. One of our Ladies, Mrs. Walter Smith, has given many years of faithful service in this program.

Chapter XIII

THE CHURCH LOOKS AHEAD

Ten Year Growth Plan 1987 thru 1997

With the ever-increasing needs for the Church to keep abreast with the demands made upon her in today's society, it was deemed necessary to make some long-range plans. A Committee was appointed for this purpose. The Committee was composed of the following: Warren Nauman, Cindy Boyer, Linda Forry and Kent Allen. Purpose: To proliferate the Good News of God by taking the following action:

I. Christian Education Commission Goal: Increase average weekly Sunday School attendance by ten people per-year.

Suggested approaches:

Initiate teacher-training program to train a minimum of four teachers per year starting in the fall of 1986.

Add a minimum of one new class per year, one of which one of which would be dedicated to the training and integrating of new members.

Develop leadership program starting in the fall of 1986.

II. Worship and Outreach Commission Goal: Increase average weekly worship attendance by 25 per year. Suggested approaches:

Initiate welcome wagon type program for all new all new families in the community.

Investigate social programs being discontinued by State or Federal government.

Each year add additional cell groups.

By 1990 add another associate pastor (possibly full time).

III. Stewardship and Maintenance Commission Goals:

Properly maintain existing facility while planning for increased needs for classrooms, etc.
Suggested approaches:

Budget each year for continued maintenance of existing facilities.

Develop long-range giving programs.

Increase benevolence by 1% each year.

Consider housing allowance for pastor instead of parsonage.

After liquidation of parking lot debt (1990) start renovations of Old Fellowship Hall or add second level to existing educational building to increase available class rooms.

Chapter XIV

A NEW PASTOR LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

One hundred and fifty years of ministry. Stepping back and looking at it from a distance, we cannot help but admire the founding families whose persistence kept the vision alive so that we can be where we are today. Pictured between the pages we hold before us are real people: people who were hurt, who were disappointed, and who failed; but also people whose faith was strong, whose commitment was deep, and whose creativity never let a problem become a barrier to progress. This is the legacy they pass on to us, the lessons are written plainly and for all to see:

1. They taught us that the church is more than a building. In fact, they met without a building for 17 years (if my figuring is right); meeting instead in homes, schools, and even taverns! Who would imagine such a thing!

2. They taught us that the church is more than traditions. They broke more than once with the original established ideas and efforts so that the people of their times would be enriched. It was John Winebrenner's "originality" that created the force to form this denomination and the Elizabethtown Church of God.

3. They taught us that the church is people; people who have dedicated their time, treasure, and talent to the One who gave their life meaning; i.e. Jesus Christ. The missions, the music, the money spent, the men and women that gave of themselves did so for one reason; that others might be able to experience a personal relationship with Him.

God forgive us if we close this book of history too quickly and pass over the instructions there; but God forgive us too if we linger on these pages too long, being content to swallow a nostalgic tear and forgetting that we have pages presented to us that must be written on for our own generations to read! God is not finished with the Elizabethtown First Church of God! The pen in the hand of our forefathers has been passed on, the pages of the chapter we are writing are clean and white, unmarred and unturned ... Now we must answer questions like "What is the church?" and "Why are we here?" of course we do not know what the future holds for us in detail, but this we do know: that if the church is a living, called, saved, communicating, growing, loving, responsive, changing, stable, filled, united, diverse, consistent, creative, empowered, sharing, holy, sent, committed, proclaiming, skilled, gifted, active, dedicated, serving, supporting, encouraging, purposive, worshipping, singing, laughing Body of Christ ... it's going to be exciting to find out!

In those God-given moments, when He allows our imaginations to run, I can see a church. I can see a church that is growing; where everyone is respected and accepted as family. I can see a church where everyone has a place, where spiritual gifts are known and used, and where people are not afraid to work. I can see a church where people laugh together and cry together, where burdens are shared and people are restored, and where people walk hand in hand to share Christ with their neighbors and community. I can see a church where funds, and teachers, and leaders are never lacking and where the desire to reach "out" to the world is equal to the desire to reach "in" and be stretched. I can see a church whose ministries emerge because people pray and dare to dream, a church whose God fights with them to storm the gates of evil and apathy, and a church whose healing light is a beacon for all to come and find the healing they seek. I can see a church where God is Sovereign, where Jesus is Lord, and where the Holy Spirit comforts and fills each member.

Impossible? Maybe ... but what a legacy to leave, just to say that we tried!