

The Second Century Chronicle - November Issue

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EAST UNION MENNONITE CHURCH

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Thanksgiving and Praise

Psalm 100:1-5 (KJV) ¹ Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. ² Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. ³ Know ye that the LORD he is God: *it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.* ⁴ Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. ⁵ For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth *endureth* to all generations.

Psalm 100:1-5 (MSG) ¹ A thanksgiving psalm On your feet now—applaud God! ² Bring a gift of laughter, sing yourselves into his presence. ³ Know this: God is God, and God, God. He made us; we didn't make him. We're his people, his well-tended sheep. ⁴ Enter with the password: "Thank you!" Make yourselves at home, talking praise. Thank him. Worship him. ⁵ For God is sheer beauty, all-generous in love, loyal always and ever.

The two texts above are the same passage but different translations; the former is older and more poetic while the latter is more contemporary and offers a little different way to hear the same psalm. As we move toward a day of celebrating thankfulness of heart, I want us as a congregation to practice entering the doors of the church building with thanks and then to move into the presence of God with praise.

On November 15 I will use the text above to give some instruction on the difference between thinking and speaking thankfulness and thinking and speaking praise. I will ask you to create a list of things you are thankful for to bring to worship on November 22 and place in a basket at the door of the church building. Upon entering the Sanctuary we will move to an expression of

praise to God in a hymn/chorus sing and expressing verbal praise to God.

Verbal praise to God is an act that comes from a thankful heart, therefore the list of thankfulness. Verbal praise to God then becomes a direct verbal expression to God in public. It is like when a bride and groom express their love and covenant of marriage to each other in a public marriage service. They are not talking about each other but rather to each other with the family, guests, and congregation being witness to the event.

The praise we will offer to God will be encouraged to be expressed in a similar style. The words of praise are to be a direct expression to God, in other words, as thou God is before you and you are speaking our opinion of God directly to God's face. And, those gathered to worship God with you are witnesses to your profession of praise.

Psalm 100 is written in an instructional manner so a better example of what I mean would be as follows:

Psalm 31:14 (NIV) ¹⁴ I trust in you, O Lord; I say, "You are my God."

Psalm 42:1 (NIV) ¹ As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God.

Psalm 59:17 (NIV) ¹⁷ O my Strength, I sing praise to you; you, O God, are my fortress, my loving God.

Psalm 63:1 (NIV) ¹ O God, you are my God, earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you, my body longs for you...

Psalm 65:9 (NIV) ⁹ You care for the land and water it; you enrich it abundantly. The streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with grain, for so you have ordained it.

Psalm 68:28 (NIV) ²⁸ Summon your power, O God; show us your strength, O God, as you have done before.

Psalm 69:13 (NIV) ¹³ But I pray to you, O Lord, in the time of your favor; in your great love, O God, answer me with your sure salvation.

Psalm 70:4 (NIV) ⁴ But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who love your salvation always say, "Let God be exalted!"

Psalm 75:1 (NIV) ¹ We give thanks to you, O God, we give thanks, for your Name is near; men tell of your wonderful deeds.

Psalm 77:14 (NIV) ¹⁴ You are the God who performs miracles; you display your power among the peoples.

Psalm 86:15 (NIV) ¹⁵ But you, O Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.

Anyway, I think you may be getting the point, and there is also praise offered to God by declaring Jesus as the Son of God and our salvation in Christ. So, think of what you are thankful for and be prepared to sing and speak praise directly to God in worship. "For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations."

Blessings,

Pastor Jay

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Mennonite Women's project for their Nov. 3 meeting are items for the Kalona Food Pantry. We invite you to participate if you wish. A table will be in the foyer for the next several Sundays to place them on. Any food or paper products are needed.



## Announcing...

Shalom Readers Club at East Union!

Shalom Readers Club is a reading program for children to help nurture relationships of peace, love and justice and is sponsored by the Outreach and Service Committee of Central Plains Mennonite Conference. The goal of the club is to help children ages 4 through 8th grade select and read books that reflect core Christian values from an Anabaptist Mennonite perspective. A child who reads seven books and reports on two of them before August 1st will earn a free book of his or her choice from the club list. A registration form with more information will be placed in parents' mailboxes soon. More information can also be found at

[www.centralplains.mennonite.net/Shalom\\_Readers](http://www.centralplains.mennonite.net/Shalom_Readers)

-Shalom Club Coordinators:

Allison Miller and Renae Miller

## Notes From Past Bulletins:

### 50 years ago: 1959

**Nov. 8** – A. Lloyd Swartzendruber is assisting in the ordination of Bro. Willard Leichty to the office of Bishop this evening.

**Nov. 15** – The Donald Yoder family wishes to transfer their membership to the Kalona Mennonite Church.

**Nov. 29** – Baptismal service for: Merlin Hochstetler, Gregory Brenneman, Myrna Hochstetler, David Troyer, Phillip Gingerich, Gloria Zook, Wanda Mullet, Mary Beth Yoder, Shirley Schrock, Marguerite Swartzendruber.

### 40 years ago: 1969

**Nov. 2** – Evening Service: “Our Work in Haiti” by Donald Zook, John David & Evelyn Miller.

**Nov. 16** – Merlyn Hochstetler family has recently united with the Church of Christ in Topeka, Kansas.

**Nov. 23** – Melvin Gingerich will be giving the third lecture of the series, “The Christian Revolution” at Lower Deer Creek this afternoon at 3:00 p.m. There will be no evening service here.

### 30 years ago: 1979

**Nov. 11** – Evening service: Tom Turner from Cedar Rapids Mennonite will be in charge of the program. He will be sharing his personal experience of becoming a conscientious objector while serving in the military.

**Nov. 18** – The IMS faculty will be giving the program. A fellowship will follow.

**Nov. 25** – Evening service by the IMS Junior Chorale presenting a program entitled, “Celebrate Life”.

### 20 years ago: 1989

**Nov. 5** – Evening service: Bruce & Edie Hochstetler will share about their experience in Bolivia.

Sat.: The Southeast Iowa Young Adults will be having a potluck supper and square dance beginning at 6 pm at the B-4 Building in Kalona. Please bring your own table service and a covered dish. Cost is \$2.00.

**Nov. 12** – We welcome Ivan Troyer from Beemer, NE to our service today. Ivan is our IA/NE Conference minister.

**Nov. 19** – Evening service: Mrs. Herb Yoder from Washington will talk about prayer.

**Nov. 26** – Evening service: Michael will share about some recent events in East Germany, and the Berlin Wall, their mission there, and ramifications of the Wall coming down.



## EAST UNION WEB SITE:

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Because of legal privacy policies and varying personal opinions as to what information is private and what is

public, out of respect to those who attend East Union, the Office staff is requesting that the following types of announcements please be submitted by immediate family members: Bereavement announcements of relatives not currently attending East Union, prayer concerns not negotiated through a pastoral or Elder Board Member visit, and individual congratulations. Change of address is preferred to come from the person or family changing address but, the office will accept change of address from extended family members.

Also, many phone numbers are considered public information. If you want your phone number to remain private, (not posted on any publication), please specifically indicate such notation every time you provide your phone number.

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*The following article appeared in the Washington Evening Journal on November 29, 1951.*

**MENNONITES MARK 100TH ANNIVERSARY**  
**THANKSGIVING DAY MARKS 100 YEARS OF**  
**ORGANIZED CHURCH**

Kalona – More than 1,000 members of the (old) Mennonite Conservative English Mennonite and Old Order Mennonite congregations of the Wellman and Kalona area witnessed the observance of their church's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on Thanksgiving Day.

The place was the East Union church three miles north of Kalona – a location chosen by the group because of size and being capable of seating more people.

Rev. Dan J. Fisher as their minister had offered for the church. Rev. Fisher as host minister extended welcome during the program. The day of observance included a program during which speakers participated, most of them being direct offspring of the original groups of settlers as well as present day ministers of the communities.

Among the speakers was Dr. Melvin Gingerich, Goshen, Indiana. Dr. Gingerich is well know as a historian and taught in the Washington High School and Junior College. He is the author of the book, "Mennonites in Iowa" and published in 1939. Both, Dr. Gingerich and Rev. Elmer G. Swartzendruber, Wellman, presented talks dealing with the history of the first settlers in this area.

**Second Observance**

This is the second centennial observance, the first being August 9, 1946 when the groups celebrated 100 years from the time the first families settled in the Washington-Johnson county area.

In his opening remarks, Rev. Swartzendruber said, "Today we are Commorating, not the beginning of this settlement, but we are thinking of the time five years later when there came to fruition that which from the beginning probably was the predominate line of thinking on the minds of those, our ancestors who came here; the actual organization of a corporate church body.

## **One of the First**

In presenting the organization and early church development history Rev. Swartzendruber mentioned that the organization of their first church in August 1851, took only 17 years after the first church building of any sort was erected in the state, the original one built in Dubuque in July 1834.

It has been said and rightly so, that there is not another Mennonite settlement in the United States which is a hundred years old or older, that has a more complete record of the major happenings, achievements, and influences than this one on which we live Rev. Swartzendruber said.

It is from these records, most of which are in his possession, that Rev. Swartzendruber drew the vast material he presented to the group last Thursday.

Historical data showed that with the coming to Iowa of two families in the spring of 1846, one more came in the Fall of that same year, one more in the Spring of 1850, and two more that Fall, and six more families in the Spring of 1851, were more than a total of 12 families living in the three county area at the time of the church organization 100 years ago.

### **Initial Group**

Those composing the initial group included the following; Mr. and Mrs. Daniel P. Guengerich and three children, April 1846; Mr. and Mrs. William Wertz and two children, April 1846; Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Schoettler and eight children, October 1846; Mr. and Mrs. John Kempf and eleven children, September 1850; Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Swartzendruber and one child; Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Swartzendruber, Mr. and Mrs. John (Johannes) P. Guengerich and three children, Mr. and Mrs. Christian J. Guengerich and four children, Mr. and Mrs. Daniel J. Guengerich and three children and Mr. and Mrs. Henry Stutzman, all of which came in April 1851.

Supposedly Elizabeth, 19 year old daughter of John Kemp's George, 20 year old son of Jacob Swartzendruber and Elizabeth, 20 year old daughter of John Guengerich are the three additional members of the church, which with the five families named above made up the church which with the twelve families named above made up a total of twenty-seven members present the day the church was organized.

Much of the land which was entered in 1846 was retained and has been in the families until the present time, which makes at the present time at least a part of three farms in the community rate as over a hundred year old farms, Rev. Swartzendruber pointed out.

From the original group finding greener pastures in this part of Iowa there grew twelve congregations having separate congregations having separate churches of their own in the corners of Johnson-Iowa-Washington counties today.

It is evident after visiting with members of the religious sect that this is the only place in the United States where the three orders as well as the old order exist and do it harmoniously.

### **Other Settlements**

It is from this area approximately ten miles wide and twenty-five miles long that many other communities have received their settlements by persons moving away from this three county area.

The observance here recently was the efforts of the Mennonite historical society of Iowa. Following their organization meetings and through the initiative of a representative group of ministers the event was arranged for and conducted on the national holiday of Thanksgiving.

### **List Ministers**

To be seen at the church during the observance festivities was a chart bearing the names of the 50 to 60 ministers who had served the churches during the past one hundred years.

Another chart carried almost an equal number of names of living ministers who have served or are now serving in the same capacity.

Last but not least, was the noon hour at the church last Thursday. While enjoying their own lunches brought along for the day and with coffee furnished by the East Union Ladies Aid, those one thousand persons reminisced of fond memories they cherished enough to make their order group grow to its present day status.

This next article was taken from “**One Family of Faith**” by Wilbert R. Shenk, Council of International Ministries.

### **Where Did We Get Our Name?**

Like Lutherans who were named after Martin Luther, Mennonites were named after an early Dutch leader, Menno Simons. However, just as Menno Simons was a follower of Christ, so Mennonites today are followers of Christ, not Menno Simons.

### **The Family Formed**

The movement was in the 16<sup>th</sup> century within the Protestant Reformation in Europe. A small group of earnest young believers said that the Reformers Martin Luther and Huldreich Zwingli had not gone far enough, Conrad Grebel led this group in an attempt to recover New Testament Christianity when they baptized one another and verbalized their faith in Jesus Christ at Zurich, Switzerland in January 1525.

### **Believers met persecution, martyrdom, death.**

Fired by their new faith, the believers began to evangelize. The movement spread to South Germany and the Netherlands. The official churches immediately opposed movement and scoffed them as “Antibaptizers,” which literally means re-baptizers. The state would not tolerate this change because in essence it defiled the government-run church, despite the Anabaptist leader’s strong appeal to scripture in support their position. In a short time, many Anabaptist leaders were martyred. Thousands more died gruesome deaths at the hands of their prosecutors over the next two generations.

### **Death and Rebirth – The Family quietly grows and spreads.**

Fifty years took a terrible toll. The small groups lived the right to own property or meet publicly for worship. They moved to many places including Russia and North America, seeking freedom to live their faith according to their consciences. From 1575 to 1850, the movement grew mainly by winning its own children to faith. In nearly every generation over the past four-hundred-fifty years, the church has experienced persecution somewhere in the world.

### **Reaching Out**

North American Mennonites began organizing home and foreign missions to the late 1800’s. They sent the first wave of missionaries abroad during the years 1899-1915, and another round of mission expansion followed World War II.

Especially since the 1940’s Mennonites have developed a substantial ministry of emergency relief and development services, which stand alongside church expansion. Currently, close to one half of the total family is to be found in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, which is also where the church is experiencing the most rapid growth.

The story of the Anabaptist-Mennonite family continues to unfold. By 2000 A.D., there will be more Mennonites in Africa, Asia and South America than in North America. In this challenging relationship, Anabaptists-Mennonites are asking what this means in a world in which nationalism, racism, tribalism, and class divide and destroy. Mennonites continue to stress peacemaking and family relationships (both spiritual and biological relationships) as important as for wholeness.

The church has not always lived up to its ideals, but God is gracious as God always has been and will be. Join us in our search to make Jesus Christ Lord of our lives.

***Submitted by L. David Yoder, Church Historian***