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Seventy-Five Years on the Shores of the Peaceful Sea: A History of the Pacific District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church of North America

Lee Price Campbell

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SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS ON THE SHORES OF THE PEACEFUL SEA
A HISTORY OF THE PACIFIC DISTRICT CONFERENCE OF THE
GENERAL CONFERENCE MENNONITE CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA

A Graduate Research
Presented to
the Faculty of
Western Evangelical Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Divinity

by
Lee Price Campbell

May 1973

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
1. INTRODUCTION	1
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	1
JUSTIFICATION OF THE PROBLEM	2
LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	2
METHODS OF PROCEDURE	3
Documentary Sources	3
Questionnaire	3
Interview	3
Personal Correspondence	3
DEFINITION OF TERMS	4
General Conference	4
Pacific District Conference	4
STATEMENT OF ORGANIZATION	4
2. THE ORGANIZATION -- THE PACIFIC DISTRICT CONFERENCE OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE MENNONITE CHURCH	6
3. EXTINGUISHED CHURCHES OF THE PACIFIC DISTRICT CONFERENCE	17
EXTINGUISHED IDAHO CHURCHES	18
Faith Mennonite Church, Filer	18
First Mennonite Church, Caldwell	19
Bethel Mennonite Church, DuBois	20
EXTINGUISHED OREGON CHURCHES	24
Grace Mennonite Church, Albany	24

Chapter	Page
Zion's Church, Polk Station (near Dallas)	25
Schrag Church, Irving (now Eugene)	26
EXTINCT CALIFORNIA CHURCHES	26
Escondido	26
First Mennonite Church, Woodlake	26
First Mennonite Church, Shafter	27
Dos Palos	28
Bethel Mennonite Church, Winton	29
Second Mennonite Church, Paso Robles	29
EXTINCT WASHINGTON CHURCHES	31
First Mennonite Church, Deer Park	31
Salem Mennonite Church, Ruff	32
Mennonite Country Church, Monroe	32
Onecho Mennonite Church, Colfax	33
CONCLUSION	36
4. PRESENT-DAY MEMBER CHURCHES	37
THE OREGON CHURCHES	37
Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Salem	37
Grace Mennonite, Dallas	40
Calvary Mennonite Church, Aurora	45
Alberta Communitie Mennonite Church, Ptld..	49
Sweet Home Community Chapel, Sweet Home .	52
THE WASHINGTON CHURCHES	55
Menno Mennonite Church, Ritzville	55
Monroe Community Church, Monroe	60
Spring Valley Mennonite Church, Newport. .	62

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The cry "Go west, young man" was heard by many, especially by farmers from the east and middle west who were attracted by vast acreages and/or cheap land, and by those who, for one reason or another, wished to start a new life in the newest American frontier. Because the Mennonite people have traditionally been farmers, several of their number were included in the westward migration. The Pacific District Conference was formed to draw these of like background into closer fellowship. It has grown through the years, slowly but steadily.

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There has been nothing written on the history of the Pacific District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church of North America since a paper by H. D. Burkholder in 1949. It is the purpose of this paper to expand upon that of Burkholder, bringing the conference history up to date and attempting to present a more complete early history (where possible) than was presented by Burkholder. This paper also purposed to see reasons for growth and/or decline of the member churches individually and of the conference and its work.

helpful to ascertain a more complete picture.

IV. METHOD OF PROCEDURE

Documentary Sources

Various documentary sources were utilized in the course of this historical investigation. All available conference material was incorporated, as well as Conference publications (Pacific District Messenger, etc.) and unpublished historical sketches.

Questionnaire

A questionnaire was sent to each church in the conference to gain needed information about the various congregations and their recent developments. The questionnaire was to be filled out by the pastor or the church historian. This questionnaire appears in the Appendix.

Interview

When necessary and possible, conference officials, past and present, were interviewed and the information recorded for use as it was pertinent to the study.

Personal Correspondence

Where person-to-person contacts were improbable, personal correspondence by letter was used for clarification and/or gaining of additional data.

V. DEFINITION OF TERMS

General Conference

The General Conference Mennonite Church of North America is the denomination, within Mennonitism in general, with which the Pacific District Conference is associated. The headquarters are in Newton, Kansas. It is often simply referred to as the "General Conference." Representatives of the associated area conferences meet in "general" conference once every three years.

Pacific District Conference

The geographical area including Arizona, California, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho comprises the present Pacific District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church of North America. This conference meets annually for business and also holds a mid-year session usually attended primarily by pastors and laymen on various conference committees. It will be referred to in this paper many times as simply "the Conference" or the P. D. C.

VI. STATEMENT OF ORGANIZATION

In the first chapter, the reader was introduced to the study. In the second chapter, the history of the organization, the Pacific District Conference, was developed. Chapter three contained information concerning the churches once affiliated with the conference but no longer existent or no longer members of this Conference. Chapter four

contained information concerning the present congregations with membership in the Pacific District Conference.

Chapter five discussed some of the involvements of the Conference as a unit. The final chapter, number six, included personal observations and conclusions regarding the growth, development, and future of the Pacific District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church of North America.

Chapter 2

THE ORGANIZATION -- THE PACIFIC DISTRICT CONFERENCE OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE MENNONITE CHURCH

As early as 1876, Mennonites travelled to the west coast. Some settled in Oregon, some in Washington, California, and Idaho. They came from Ohio, Kansas, and the Dakotas and brought with them a well-rooted custom, the desire to worship God regularly. Wherever they settled, the first arrangements made were for worship and Sunday school. These meetings found shelter in homes, school-houses, granaries, warehouses or any other buildings of sufficient size.

These scattered Mennonite communities needed a sense of unity. This was partially accomplished by a travelling minister who made visits to each of these isolated and scattered groups. These visits aided and encouraged the organization of churches and the choosing or calling of pastors. The people also needed to sense a tie with home -- the church in the east from which they had come. This was partially satisfied by assisting the various boards of the General Conference with gifts for missionary purpose. The thought of distance between east and west was forgotten in this united work.

But there was still that longing for a closer

fellowship, both bodily and spiritually, with the Brethren of the Faith throughout the west. A meeting arranged by Rev. J. B. Baer, then Field Secretary (i.e. travelling minister) of the General Conference, was set for May 25, 1896, to be held at Pratum, Oregon, and attended by the organized churches of the west.¹ There were two in Oregon, each with a Sunday school, and one in Washington with a Sunday school. There was also another organized Mennonite Sunday school in Oregon. A three-day program was planned, to be preceded by a mission festival and a children's and young people's service on the 24th. That the people were vitally and intensely interested in this venture of unity is evident in that they began arriving as early as the 22nd. We wish to quote at length concerning this first session from an article by brother Dan Steiner:

A well prepared program was rich and brimfull with good things to enjoy. The discussions were lively and to the point and were well taken. The fellowship was outstanding.

...The united choir of thirty-five voices from Eugene, Dallas, and Pratum, under the leadership of Dan J. Steiner, aided much in making the large gathering a grand success....

Those were indeed "horse and buggy days." Guests from far and near...came on their hacks and spring wagons. The horses from a distance were turned out in Wm. B. McCallister's pasture where there was running

¹May 25, 1896, is the date which appears on all previous material written about P.D.C.. The translation of the original minutes reads March 25, 1897. After some investigation into further year's minutes and a perpetual calendar, the writer found the May 25, 1896 date correct. The scribe was obviously human and made an error as the minutes were written from memory a year later. This is also the opinion of LaVernae Dick, the Mennonite historian from Dallas, Oregon.

water (Pudding River). Dan Schrag's team...got away -- someone had left the gate open. The owners wandered around for three days looking for them when they finally located one at Harrisburg near the Santiam Ferry on its way home, and the other a few miles from Pratum..

...the visiting ministers from the East and South were provided for in the homes, while the local guests from Eugene and Dallas brought blankets and pillows along and were comfortably quartered in the Pratum warehouse. An abundant supply of straw was at their disposal to make up their beds on the floor.

An old cooking stove was provided and provisions furnished wherewith they prepared their own meals. The furniture consisted of tables made up of footboards planed on one side and empty store boxes to sit on. The apartments were partitioned off with hop sacks and burlap.²

The conference was attended by representatives from Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Enger (Pratum), Oregon; the Mennonite Church of Irving (Eugene), Oregon; the Sunday school group from Polk Station (near Dallas); and the First Mennonite Church of Colfax, Washington. Also in attendance were several brethren from the Amish Mennonite Church of Eugene. Guests from the East who helped with the conference for unity were laymen Peter Steiner and Jonas Amstutz and Reverends Samuel F. Sprunger, J.J. Balzer, and Chris Kaufman. Rev. Sprunger was elected as chairman of the historic meeting and Rev. Balzer served as secretary. At this first session, young people and children had an important place and part on the program. The secretary's minutes revealed that nearly two days were devoted to a Sunday School convention. Also at this first meeting

²Dan J. Steiner, "History and Organization of Pacific District Conference," Mennonite Weekly Review, December 12, 1946.

Brother P. R. Aeschliman was elected to the office of itinerating minister, making the Pacific District the only one to have such a minister from its inception. "At the first session a Program-Business Committee consisting of three members was elected to which all the work was assigned."³ Then in 1904, the Resolution committee was added and in 1908, a permanent Evangelization committee. "Beschlossen, Dasz wir hier in dieser Konferenz vertretenden Gemeinden und Glieder uns jetzt also Mennonitische District Konferenz an der Kueste des Stillen Meeres betrachten und mit der Allgemeinen Konfernz verbunden, wollen wir das Reich Gottes nach Vermoegen bauen helfen." With this resolution the Pacific District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church of North America was born, and with a purpose. "Resolved, that we in session at this conference representing our churches and members thereof do now declare and unite ourselves as the Mennonite District Conference of the Pacific Coast and declare ourselves united with the General Conference Mennonite Church of North America in the building of God's Kingdom to the best of our ability."⁴

³D.D. King, "The Pacific District Conference," Mennonite Year Book and Almanac (Berne: Mennonite Book Concern, 1925), p. 41

⁴Rev. J.M. Galle, "Why Was the Pacific District Conference Organized?" Sixtieth Anniversary Booklet, 1956,

The second conference was held at Eugene, Oregon, in 1897 (?). At this conference it was decided to purchase a book to record the minutes, thus they have been carefully preserved until today (though in German until 1922). It was also decided that the representation of the churches at the conference sessions shall be one vote for every ten members or fractional part thereof.⁵ This arrangement has continued to date. At this second annual session a treasury was created and treasurer elected to provide funds primarily for the itineration minister.

In 1908, Conference accepted a constitution which the Business Committee had prepared (in German). It was revised and translated into English in 1937. According to article three there was a three-fold purpose for the existence of the conference: to promote fellowship among our Mennonite churches on the Pacific Coast and the West; to cooperate in the spreading and establishing of the Kingdom of God in our own district; and to give a united support to the work of the various Boards of the General Conference Mennonite Church of North America.⁶ The principle upon which the conference acted was found in article four: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ."⁷ Thus the Pacific

⁵King, loc. cit.

⁶Galle, op. cit., p. 2.

⁷H.D. Burkholder, The Story of Our Conference and Churches (Newton: The Mennonite Press, 1951), p. 2.

District Conference was not formed as a lawmaking body, but an advisory one, not authorized to dictate rules of government to the congregation.

The Conference believes firmly in the congregational form of government, with the local church retaining freedom of self-determination. For this reason, the Conference organization is democratic in form and function. It is a deliberative body carrying powers of recommendation but not of legislation. Its policies, plans, and recommendations are generally formulated by its Executive Committee and working committees, and presented to the Conference for endorsement, modification or rejection.⁸

It is a union for joint work, and among other things seeks to find ways and means to assist the scattered settlements, by advice and actual help, in the edification and advancement of their congregations, and therefore makes only such regulations as are necessary to carry on this united work. In regard to matters of faith it requires of these congregations who would unite with it that they adhere to the doctrines generally accepted by the Mennonites. By these Mennonite doctrines we understand, baptism on confession of faith, the abstaining from oaths, a biblical non-resistance, the practice of a scriptural church discipline, and the inadvisability of membership in secret oath-bound societies, since we consider their principles as contrary to the teachings of Christ and the apostles.⁹

In 1968, the Articles of Incorporation were restated and the By-laws amended. Restated, the *raison d'etre* of the conference was "to mutually foster our Christian life; to be drawn closer together as we serve our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; and to unite ourselves more effectively in our missionary efforts to bring a spiritual

⁸Secretary's Report of the Sixty-ninth Session of the Pacific District Conference, 1968, p. 23.

⁹Burkholder, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

ministry to others."¹⁰

The officers of the conference are the same as of most organizations: the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. These four individuals plus the chairmen of the Standing Committees form the Executive Committee. It is to the Executive Committee that churches now turn for help. This committee then refers them to one of the standing committees or a special committee appointed by them. It is also the job of the Executive Committee to fill vacancies in any elective office which arise between sessions; it prepares a budget of expenditures to be approved by the Conference session, prepares resolutions to be brought before the session, and appoints annually the members of several committees.¹¹ The standing committees are Business Administration, Home Missions, Education, Christian Service, and Program. The Business Administration Committee replaced the "Trustees" and is composed of the Conference officers and five members at large who serve five-year terms. This committee handles all the legal matters concerning Conference properties as well as the financial involvements, such as insurance, buying and selling, and conference budget. The Home Missions Committee consists of five members serving five-year terms. This very important conference committee has

¹⁰Secretary's report, op. cit., p. 20.

¹¹Ibid., p. 26.

as its duties:

1. To provide spiritual nurture for church members that live in areas with no organized churches and for pastorless churches within the Conference district.
2. To open new fields of labor and appoint the necessary workers for such fields.
3. To tender assistance to settle any disputes and give assistance to problem situations which may exist in the churches.
4. To assist churches in securing speakers for evangelistic services or meetings for special occasion.
5. To determine the amount and type of aid where churches are in need.
6. To function as the Conference ministerial committee, and as such shall examine and recommend applicants for the ministry.
7. To examine churches applying for membership in the Conference.
8. To raise funds for special projects and to employ the Future Projects Reserve Fund to make grants to special mission projects.¹²

The members of this significant committee serve as the pastor's pastor in the state in which they live, replacing the old office of conference minister.

The Christian Service Committee is the former "Peace Committee." It consists of three members. Its duties are:

1. To cooperate with the General Conference Board of Christian Service in its total program of services including relief, rehabilitation, mutual aid, voluntary service, peace, mental health, and other areas of social concern.
2. To promote such other causes and services expressing a Christian witness as are appropriate or are delegated to the committee.¹³

The basic function of the Program Committee is to arrange and organize the program for the annual Conference sessions and to assist in its orderly procedure. The

¹²Ibid., p. 27.

¹³Ibid., p. 29.

Education Committee, in cooperation with the General Conference Board of Education and Publication, seeks to promote Christian education in church schools and summer Bible schools, as well as special Christian principles, Mennonite principles, etc. It is also the responsibility of this committee to publish The Messenger, the district paper which publicizes the concerns and activities of the conference.¹⁴ One committee is noticeably lacking: an historical committee.

The auxiliaries of the Conference are the Mennonite Men, The Women's Missionary Association, the Young Mission Workers, and the Young People's Union. The Women's Missionary Association is perhaps the most active of these groups and seems to function with the minimum of problems. The program involves various circles of women within each church which meet regularly for fellowship and service. The offerings of the W.M.A. are used for a collective project such as the support of a General Conference missionary. Often the women do quilting and other handiwork projects which are auctioned off at a large auction in Reedley, California each year, in cooperation with Mennonite Central Committee. The other three auxiliary organizations seem to have some difficulty in coordinating programs, due mostly to the large distances between the churches. The children and young people are active in each of the churches

¹⁴Ibid., p. 28.

but Conference-wide programs have been weak. The men of the Conference have been instrumental in projects to aid new churches, both in man-hours and materials, and in providing (at times) scholarships to young people from our Conference who wished to attend Bethel College, the General Conference college in Newton, Kansas.

Bethel College is one of the P.D.C's Conference involvements. Like the other conferences, it has members on the Bethel Board of Directors. The P.D.C. has two such representatives who serve six-year terms. The Conference also supports the work of Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Indiana. From the start the Conference has been education-minded and these involvements continue that emphasis. The Conference is also active in Mennonite Mutual Aid, which provides automobile, health, and burial insurance for Mennonites. It also supports the projects of Mennonite Central Committee, which are many and varied and include voluntary service work, mission work, and disaster aid throughout the world. The latest cooperative venture into which the P.D.C. has entered is the Orange County, California, Mennonite Fellowship. This is a mission-church start in the heavily populated and rapidly growing Orange County and is supported both by the Pacific District Conference and the Southwest Mennonite Conference of the (Old) Mennonite Church.

The Pacific District Conference has grown, through its colorful history, from three small congregations in

1897, to twenty-one in 1972, with a total membership of 3400 plus, and from no budget in the early years to an annual budget of nearly \$23,000 in 1972. It is this growth (and decline) of member churches and members which we will examine in the following two chapters.

Chapter 3

EXTINCT CHURCHES OF THE PACIFIC DISTRICT CONFERENCE

Just as there is no church without individual believers, there is no conference organization without member churches. The organization and structure of the Pacific District Conference have been examined in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 explored the P.D.C. member churches of days gone by, churches now extinct. Chapter four studied the present conference member-churches.

During the seventy-five years of the Conference, there have been many changes. During the last twenty-five years, in fact, the composition of the conference has undergone much change. Churches have been lost and new ones have joined.

For many of the extinct churches which were once members of the Pacific District Conference, very little or no information was readily available. For these, a mere mention must suffice. For some, a more complete picture was found.¹

The extinct churches are covered according to state, beginning with Idaho, which has the largest number of casualties.

¹The list may not be complete since the early German minutes have not all been translated at this writing.

EXTINCT IDAHO CHURCHES

Faith Mennonite Church, Filer

Filer Mennonite Church (Old Mennonite) at 115 Fifth Street was organized on January 31, 1914, with twenty-two charter members. David Hilty was the bishop, Samuel Honderich the minister and Chris Snyder the deacon. Their first building was dedicated on September 19, 1915, and was enlarged in 1953. By 1955, the membership reached one hundred and six.²

Apparently, some of these (Old) Mennonites were unhappy and wanted a different Mennonite affiliation. The minutes of the 1954 session of the Pacific District Conference report that some Old Mennonites in Filer were seeking a General Conference pastor. A church was then formed. According to the 1955 minutes of the P.D.C., this new church joined the conference in that year. The January, 1956, Worker's Exchange (now the Pacific District Messenger) records that Filer had just purchased a church building with pews and pulpit for \$565.00.

The church, which began in dissention, did not seem to grow over the years. One source attributes this to internal strife. So, we see in the 1968 minutes that Faith Church may close her doors due to small attendance. The

²Samuel Honderich, "Faith Mennonite Church," The Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol. II (Scottdale: Mennonite Publishing House, 1955), p. 329.

following year's minutes contain the report that this had happened.

Men who had served the church were W. Harley King, Norman Schmidt, and Frank Horst.

First Mennonite Church, Caldwell

First Mennonite Church was organized on May 25, 1947, with twenty-eight charter members.³ They had begun to meet in a school house in 1946.⁴ Those who started the church were of pioneer stock who had come to Caldwell-Nampa area in 1902. There were other (Old) Mennonite churches in the area in 1946. Other settlers came to the area from Oregon and Nebraska between 1941 and 1946.⁵

The group dedicated its building on April 18, 1948. By 1952, the membership had only risen to thirty-four.⁶ Apparently, this church experienced problems from the beginning. One of these was that even though there was interest in having a church, few cared to support it. Also, the congregation was almost too small to support the operation of a church. Another problem which could not be overcome was that one family became interested in "Armstrongism," and others were attracted by the Jehovah

³Menno H. Kliever, "First Mennonite Church," The Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol. 1 (Scottdale: Mennonite Publishing House, 1955), p. 490.

⁴LaVernae Dick, personal conversation with the author.

⁵Menno H. Kliever, op. cit. ⁶Ibid.

Witnesses and other cults in the area.⁷ These things, combined with the lack of employment in the area, kept the congregation small. In 1962, the few people who were left "decided to disband and find spiritual fellowship with other churches in town."⁸

Pastors and leaders of the church were Menno Kliwer, 1947-1954; Lyman Sprunger, 1954-1956; and Norman Schmidt, 1956-1958. From August, 1958 to 1961 there was no permanent pastor. The church was served by students from Northwest Nazarene College in Nampa and Mr. Enoch Zimmerman from Salem, Oreon. Rev. Kliwer returned again in 1961 (though holding another full-time job) and served until the church closed its doors in 1962.⁹

Bethel Mennonite Church, DuBois

In 1913-1915 a sizeable number of families came to Central Idaho and settled in the area near DuBois. They came because other Mennonite settlements were becoming crowded and land was expensive. Idaho offered level land which was available for homestead in 160 or 320 acre tracts. Some came expecting to dry-farm; others came with the cherished hope that irrigation water would become available.

⁷La Vernae Dick, op, cit.

⁸Mrs. Menno Kliwer, personal correspondence with the author.

⁹Ibid.

Perhaps the real driving force in back of obtaining this free land and resettlement was the desire to have enough land to continue farming as means of obtaining a livelihood and the opportunity to bring up a young family in the accustomed Mennonite tradition.¹⁰

The life they found was unbelievably difficult from the beginning. The first problem was grubbing the sage brush from the land in order to plant the crops.

Naturally, these people did not shirk from gathering together for worship and study. It appears that a Sunday School was begun first, as the earliest records to be found were the Sunday School minutes of January 3, 1915. The first church records are dated January 1, 1916. The settlers gathered first in homes, then in the local school. They were served by pastors from the Aberdeen, Idaho, church and Rev. Aeschliman from Colfax, Washington. They never did have a permanent pastor, yet seemed to have had a "cohesive oneness."

German was the language used, both in the home and in the church. Perhaps because of this, these settlers never mixed socially with the English speaking people among whom they lived and worked.

The settlement grew and so did the Sunday School. In 1916, the attendance ran over one hundred regularly,

¹⁰Aaron J. Epp, "Portions of the history of the Bethel Mennonite Church of DuBois, Idaho: The Dutch Flats of DuBois, 1913-1920," 1972, p. 4. All information on the Bethel Church is drawn from this recently completed history by Rev. Epp.

with a high of one hundred and forty-four. The group was very missions-minded, and records indicate that often as much as half of their offering was given to missions.

The church joined the Pacific District Conference in 1916 and the General Conference in 1917. By 1918, some of the people had begun moving away -- back to their original homes or into Aberdeen or on to California. Crops were failing and money was scarce. The DuBois sojourn was over by 1920.

Minidoka, Idaho

Minidoka is a community in south-central Idaho, where there was apparently a Mennonite settlement similar to that at DuBois. The only information to be found to this date on Mennonite church there is a reference in the Pacific District Conference Minutes of 1925 to the growing mission work in Minidoka. There is no result of that work today.

Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Aberdeen

During the ministry of Rev. John Baer at the Salem Mennonite (now First) Church in Aberdeen (1909-1911), non-irrigation land west of Aberdeen was opened for homesteading. Many more people, including Mennonites, came to try their hand at dry farming. The Emmanuel Mennonite Church was organized on April 22, 1912, to care for the

spiritual needs of these people.¹¹ The church was also referred to as the "Homestead" church.¹² It was under the leadership of Elder Jacob Hege, who had withdrawn from First Church. The congregation constructed a building four miles southwest of town.¹³

During Rev. Baer's ministry at First Mennonite Church in Aberdeen, the English language gained a strong foothold. Because of a preference for the use of the German language, a number of members left First and joined the newly-organized Emmanuel Church.¹⁴

Elder Hege was succeeded by Rev. Leonard Dirks. After his death, the entire burden of the church rested upon Rev. John Toevs, who himself was not in good health. For this reason the Emmanuel Church was dissolved early in 1929.¹⁵ At that time it had seventy-five members.¹⁶ An invitation was extended by the First Church to the Emmanuel brethren and in the fall of 1929, Rev. Toevs, with several of his congregation, joined First Church. Most of the remaining members soon followed suit. Rev. Toevs often assisted the pastor at First, until he died in 1934.

¹¹"The History of the First Mennonite Church," as compiled for the fiftieth anniversary in 1957, p. 2.

¹²Frank Wenger, "Emmanuel Church," The Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol. II, p. 203.

¹³op. cit.

¹⁴Ibid. ¹⁵Ibid., p. 5.

¹⁶Frank Wenger, op. cit.,

Thus, the German-speaking group, some of whom had left First Church several years earlier, now were united with the brethren of First Mennonite Church in Aberdeen, a church which continues today, striving to meet the spiritual needs of the Mennonite people in the Aberdeen area.

EXTINCT OREGON CHURCHES

Grace Mennonite Church, Albany

Grace Church was organized on June 29, 1931 under the leadership of J. M. Franz, P. R. Aeschliman, and A. J. Neuenschwander.¹⁷ The history of the church is rather stormy. According to one observer, much of the problem lay in the men who were called as pastors to this congregation. They were often critical of the General Conference and church institutions. When the second pastor left, he urged the congregation to disband and about one third of the people left the church. The third pastor was also anti-conference and came declaring that the price of his coming was that the church withdraw from the conference. He was given three months to leave. There was then quite a succession of short-term pastors. All of this produced a great deal of tension, critical attitude, discouragement and little growth.¹⁸

¹⁷P. A. Kliwer, "Grace Mennonite Church," Mennonite Encyclopedia, vol. II, p. 560.

¹⁸Paul N. Roth, in personal conversation with the author, November, 1972.

Pastors who had served the congregation until 1955 were W. Harley King, William Augsburgsburger, J. M. Franz, P. A. Kliever, Henry Dalke, E. J. Peters, and Herbert King. The church was not a total dismal failure, as evidenced in the Mennonite Encyclopedia, which records that in 1954, the congregation was 117 and was meeting in a former Presbyterian church.¹⁹

At the Home Missions Committee meeting of November 12, 1968, it was noted that the Grace Mennonite congregation wished to disband. The group had been steadily losing members and was beset with internal strife. The last worship service was held on November 10, 1968. Early in 1969, Rev. Clyde Dirks died, leaving the group without leadership. Some investigation was made by the Conference with regard to a combined effort with the (Old) Mennonite Church at Corvallis, since a number of Grace members were attending there. No action was taken, and the group went their own separate ways to find a church home.

Zion's Church, Polk Station (near Dallas)

This church is extinct only because all of its members moved into Dallas and formed the Grace Mennonite Church. For the story, see the history of Grace Mennonite Church, Chapter 4, page .

¹⁹P. A. Kliever, op. cit.

Schrag Church, Irving (now Eugene)

This church is extinct only because the entire congregation migrated to Adams County, Washington. The present Menno Mennonite Church at Ritzville, Washington, is the former Schrag congregation. See Menno history in Chapter 4, page .

EXTINCT CALIFORNIA CHURCHES

Escondido

The Escondido Church was in San Diego County, California. It's first meeting house was dedicated on October 29, 1911, with M. M. Horsch of Upland presiding. The congregation was officially organized with nineteen charter members in the spring of 1912. Shortly after its organization a number of families moved away and the attendance began to decline. In 1930, the Sunday School was discontinued and worship was carried on only once a month. Then in 1934, the congregation was dissolved. Men who had pastored the church were Herman Janzen, H. H. Adrian, and D. D. Voth.²⁰

First Mennonite Church, Woodlake

Woodlake was a Mennonite settlement in the eastern part of the San Joaquin Valley in central California. "Before World War I numerous Mennonites became stockholders

²⁰H. D. Burkholder, "Escondido," The Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol. II, p. 249.

of the Woodlake Citrus Development Co., some of whom never moved to Woodlake."²¹ However, settlers did move from Reedley and Upland. They grew oranges.

In 1915, H. A. Bachman came to Woodlake and on June 13 of that year the First Mennonite Church was organized with eighteen charter members. They met in a local school.

The venture was short-lived, for reasons unknown to this author. After being served by Rev. F. J. Isaak (1916-1918) and J. J. Englebrecht (1918-1919), the Reedley church provided occasional leadership. The last meeting of the First Mennonite Church of Woodlake was held on January 20, 1929, attended by three families. Mennonites in the area began attending in Reedley. By 1953, there were only three families who had once belonged to the church living in the area.

First Mennonite Church, Shafter

This church had its beginnings with the migration of Mennonites to the area in 1918-1919.²² This was stimulated by H. J. Krehbiel of Reedley. Meetings were held in homes, in the Santa Fe school, and later in a small church erected on Scaroni Avenue. The first leader was Herman Janzen.

²¹Cornelius Krahn, "Woodlake Mennonite Settlement and Church," The Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol. IV, p. 977.

²²John Bartel, "Shafter," The Mennonite Encyclopedia Vol. IV, p. 509.

When Janzen and some families moved away, those remaining joined with other denominations, but when Krehbiel returned in 1935, the congregation was reorganized. They built a new church in 1937, and in 1957 had fifty-six members pastored by Ramon H. Jantz.

The congregation grew little. Its final service was held December 27, 1964, after which it merged with the Shafter Mennonite Brethren Church.²³

Dos Palos

In the Pacific District Conference Minutes for 1931 it was recorded that the conference welcomed the church at Dos Palos into its fellowship. It further described Dos Palos as a new irrigation project about ninety miles northwest from Reedley. There were about thirty Mennonite families residing there. Materials for a church building were given to them by a land company. The Sunday School that year had an attendance of ninety and the church of about one hundred. The congregation had a regular pastor and received aid from both the General Conference and the Pacific District Conference. Just when and why the church discontinued services has not yet been learned by this author.²⁴

²³Minutes of the Pacific District Conference Session, 1965, p. 19.

²⁴Dos Palos and other early extinct churches were treated in a thesis done by Gordon R. Dyck at Mennonite Biblical Seminary several years ago. The writer has been unable to secure it at this writing.

Bethel Mennonite Church, Winton

The Home Missions Committee began work in the Winton area in 1938, under the leadership of D. B. Hess. The Bethel Church was organized in May of 1940, through the Home Missions Committee of the General Conference and the Evangelization Committee of the Pacific District.²⁵ There were thirty charter members, under the leadership of Dillman B. Hess. In 1941, J. P. Glanzer replaced Hess. The congregation worshipped in the "Koehn church" building, so named for Joel Koehn who was the first pastor to serve the Mennonite community there in 1920.

By 1935, the congregation had grown to only fifty-two. In 1966, the congregation became a part of a new United Mennonite Church in Atwater, which is at present a member of Pacific District Conference.²⁶

Second Mennonite Church, Paso Robles

Through the years, this church was also known as San Marcus Mennonite Church and then Second Mennonite Church and then finally Willow Creek Mennonite Church. It was the result of a division in the original San Marcus group which lived in the greater Paso Robles area (see First Mennonite Church, Paso Robles, chapter 4, p.). It was organized in the spring of 1904 with thirty-nine charter members.²⁷

²⁵Myron D. Hilty, "Bethel Mennonite Church," The Mennonite Encyclopedia, Vol. I, p. 313.

²⁶Minutes of the Pacific District Conference Session, 1966, p. 7.

²⁷H. D. Burkholder, p. 42.

F. F. Jantzen was chosen as their first elder.

Sunday School and worship services were held in the San Marcus church, near Chimney Rock, until the fall of 1909 when a number of families moved to Willow Creek, southwest of Paso Robles. After this the congregation met alternately at the San Marcus church and at the Summit School building.²⁸

In the spring of 1928, the San Marcus church was dismantled and moved to Willow Creek.

Early in the life of this church there were difficult losses. Three families moved to Aberdeen, Idaho; one family joined the "Apostles;" and Rev. A. J. Wiebe died in 1922. It was then decided to have only one pastor and aid him financially.²⁹ In 1922, the sanctuary was enlarged. It was enlarged again in 1935, the year in which it was decided to have both an English and German sermon each Sunday. Later this was cut to but one German service per month.³⁰

In 1935, D. D. Schultz came to help F. F. Jantzen with the preaching. (He was Jantzen's son-in-law). In 1946, Jantzen resigned after serving for forty-two years. He was succeeded by Rev. W. Harley King. During his ministry the church received its state charter, dug a well, added a rest room with running water and a thirty-by-forty foot annex for fellowship and Sunday School. Rev. King resigned in 1952. He was followed by Rev. Edward Toews,

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Mrs. Louis Bergman, an untitled article on the history of First Mennonite Church, with emphasis on Willow Creek Church. No date. pages not numbered.

³⁰Ibid.

Rudolph Towes, M J. Galle, J. R. Duerksen, and Benno Teovs.³¹

On a January morning in 1966, telephone calls spread the word that the Willow Creek Church was on fire. The organ and piano were saved, but the building and most of its contents were lost. After numerous meetings it was decided to merge with First Mennonite Church of Paso Robles rather than rebuild. This merger was carried out in September of 1966.³²

EXTINCT WASHINGTON CHURCHES

First Mennonite Church, Deer Park

Deer Park was a community near Newport, in north-eastern Washington. Pacific District Conference Home Missions work was begun there in 1936-1937. The 1937 minutes record a group here as a home missions church. The 1938 minutes report that the Deer Park group was organized as a church, with M. J. Galle as pastor. In 1939, this church was accepted into the Pacific District Conference. It had, at that time, twenty-six members. The church was short-lived. It folded in 1943-44 because most of the families moved, some to Lynden (in Western Washington), some to Dallas, Oregon, and some to Newport, just a few miles away. Because today the area is one of the most economically handicapped in the state, it is not difficult

³¹Ibid. ³²Ibid.

to understand this migration away from it.

Salem Mennonite Church, Ruff

Ruff is only a few miles away from the present Menno Mennonite Church at Ritzville. Those several miles were a transportation problem in the early 1900's, and when many Mennonite settlers began locating as far away as Ruff and Tiflis, they decided to organize their own church. This was done in 1910. In 1911, they received fifteen new members by baptism. In 1918, they erected a church building, having met previously in the Ruff and Tiflis schools. In 1930 the area was caught in the Great Depression and had a serious crop failure. They ceased using the building. In 1934, the congregation dissolved and joined the Menno congregation.³³

Mennonite Country Church, Monroe

Like other churches in the Conference, Monroe Country Church was the result of a deep split. On June 14, 1944, twenty-one members of the First Mennonite Church withdrew and signed their names on the charter of Mennonite Country Church. The movement was led by Rev. John L. McNabb, Mrs. Cara Scott and Lloyd Redden. Rev. McNabb was followed by John Breedlove and Alfred Schwartz. The congregation became a member of the Pacific District

³³P. C. Jantz, "History of the Menno Mennonite Church," (a paper written for the church, c. 1950), pages not numbered.

Conference in June, 1945. In 1946 a building was constructed.

The congregation, like others of the Conference, was missions minded and the Women's Missionary Society was the most active auxiliary. However, due to insufficient growth, the representatives of First Church and Country Church met with the intent of merger. After a series of meetings, the merger took place in February, 1971. The new congregation is the Monroe Community Chapel.³⁴

Onecho Mennonite Church, Colfax

The first Mennonites came to the Colfax area in 1886. They were of Swiss origin. When they arrived, there was a fourteen-year-old Methodist work which was doing poorly. The Mennonite colony grew rapidly in the following years. In 1893, Paul R. Aeschliman returned from Kansas with his bride and, with the help of J. B. Baer, of the General Conference, formed the First Mennonite Church. There were twenty-four charter members. Aeschliman became the pastor, a position which paid no salary. He served in that capacity for forty-four years.

The group built its first church building in 1895. The second one was constructed in 1926, debt free. In 1937, a parsonage was constructed, and in 1964 extensive remodeling and construction of a new education building were finished.

³⁴Homer Flickinger, in response to the author's questionnaire.

W. Harley King succeeded Rev. Aeschliman in 1936. The congregation continued to increase. In 1943, there were one hundred and sixteen active members and an additional forty Methodists. The Mennonites and Methodists had been meeting together from the beginning, with a sermon by a Methodist pastor once a month. W. Harley King was followed by P. D. Unruh in 1946.³⁵ He pastored until 1961, at which time Rev. Charles Lyman became the pastor.

It was at this point that a very noticeable change became evident in the congregation. The church, which, in 1896, was one of the three founders and initial members of the Pacific District Conference, began to turn against it. Some who were there at the time have said that Rev. Lyman came only on the condition that the Onecho Mennonite Church (as it was then called) would leave the conference. This was accomplished in 1962, when the Onecho church withdrew from both the Pacific District Conference and the General Conference. The church today is the Onecho Bible Church and has no Mennonite affiliation nor distictives.

Since 1962, the membership and attendance have increased by 30 per cent. The support of missions has increased 106 per cent, "excluding the church farm; with

³⁵Dwight Ensley, "History," from an article in the local Colfax newspaper, written on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary in 1943.

the church farm included, the increase would be 263 per cent."³⁶ The large addition came in 1964, though plans were begun before 1962. Additional improvements are now being contemplated. The church is now affiliated with the National Association of Evangelicals and the Northwest Independent Church Extension.³⁷ They are pastored by Rev. Shin.

The cause (or causes) of the unrest which led to withdrawing from the Mennonite church appear to have begun with the leadership, both pastoral and lay, and to have been most prevalent among the younger members. In 1962, the Onecho church presented a nine-page grievance letter to the P. D. C. calling for a united conference condemnation of the "liberal" tendencies which the Onecho group felt the General Conference was taking, as found in some articles printed in the Mennonite. These tendencies included, leaning toward the National and World Council of Churches and placing too much emphasis upon social and political concerns. Both of these they linked with a theistic communism, and so had visions of a communist take-over through the world-church organization. The other grievance was that "too much conference time, money, and effort was being spent on non-spiritual business at the expense of

³⁶Mrs. Vera Rogers, Clerk of Onecho Bible Church, in response to the author's questionnaire.

³⁷Ibid.

the cause of the church which is to promote the Gospel message..."³⁸ This statement was not defined in the grievance letter.

The current president of the Pacific District Conference, who was also active at that time, views the problem as the influence of "Scofield dispensationalism" and "ultra-fundamentalism" which characterized the Bible Institute movement.³⁹ This led to the feeling that "if you do not subscribe to our point of view, then what we have said about the conference is true."

Impatient and unhappy with the Pacific District Conference's failure to take immediate action upon its proposed resolution, the Onecho Mennonite Church withdrew from the Conference. Her fears at the time have not come to pass over the years. But, whether her action was "right" or "wrong" is now of little significance. The church is growing and continues to preach Christ and Him crucified. It is that message which He honors and which gives new life to the sinner. He is in the work there today.

CONCLUSION

Were one to stop the history of the conference with

³⁸Letter from the Onecho congregation to P.D.C., 1962, p. 3.

³⁹Paul N. Roth, in personal conversation with the author, November, 1972.

these pages, the story of the Pacific District Conference would be one of dismal failure. However, any of those who were members of one of the extinct churches are now members of one of the existing and active churches. These churches are the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 4

PRESENT-DAY MEMBER CHURCHES

The Oregon Churches

We begin this chapter with the Oregon churches because it was in Oregon that the Pacific District Conference had its beginning, and it is in Oregon that the conference is legally incorporated. We shall follow the pattern of the oldest church to the youngest within each state group.

Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Salem

The families which began this church were of Swiss origin. In the late 1870's, a number of families left Ohio for the Willamette Valley in Oregon. The first of these to settle in the Silverton area were John Lichty and Chris Geigers, John Ulrich Beers, John Gerbers, the Bierys and Steffens, Joshua Shutter, and Peter Herr.¹ Like many Mennonite groups, they first met in homes for worship. Later they worshipped with a small group of German Reformed people in a nearby church. "Before they could officially organize into a church, there was already a split among

¹"History of the Emmanuel Mennonite Church," included in the church's Seventy-fifth Anniversary booklet, 1965, pages not numbered.

them."² The more conservative objected to having a Sunday School, so they separated and built a church near the cemetery. This group was known as the C. B. Steiner church or the "cemetery" church, and was short-lived. It disbanded in 1911.³ Some returned to the original group while others went elsewhere in Oregon.

In the fall of 1889, Rev. John Rich moved from Alsace, France, to Salem, Oregon. In that year, he was granted use of the abandoned Reformed church and began holding monthly services, and then bi-monthly, walking the ten miles from Salem to Pratum.⁴ In 1890, Rev. J. B. Baer, the traveling minister for the General Conference, helped the more progressive group organize as the Waldo Hills Mennonite Church, with thirty-two charter members. Later, the name was changed to Emmanuel Mennonite Church. While there was a post office there, the area was known as Pratum. Today it is part of Salem. John Rich continued to serve the church until 1894, when he became unhappy with his baptism and joined with the German Baptist church at Salem. From a translation of the Church Journal, a September, 1894, entry reads: "Elder John Rich was rebaptized by Pastor Kliwer in Salem in September, 1894. He was baptized upon confession of faith and a second baptism won't make him any

²La Vernae J. Dick, "Early Mennonites in Oregon" (unpublished Master's Thesis, Oregon College of Education, 1972), p. 22.

³Ibid. ⁴Anniversary Booklet, op. cit.

holier. Matthew 28:19-20.... We should stay by the Word of the Holy Bible and John Rich is now no longer recognized as a member and deacon of our church."⁵ Several months later a member of the congregation, Peter J. Gerig, Jr., was called as pastor. He accepted and was ordained on December 16, 1894, by Jacob R. Schrag of Eugene, Oregon.

"Gerig was the first of three ministers to serve the congregation for fifteen consecutive years."⁶ During his ministry, the membership doubled, making necessary larger facilities. In 1904, on an acre of ground donated by William Rothe, Sr., a building was erected. This building was remodeled and enlarged in 1940. Following Rev. Gerig's death, Rev. S. S. Baumgartner of Kansas became the pastor in March of 1910. He ministered until 1925. Then in April, 1925, Rev. J. M. Franz "began a ministry that saw the membership nearly double once again."⁷ During his ministry, the facilities were enlarged twice, once in 1930 with a basement, a furnace, and electric lights, and again in 1940, with ten new classrooms, a balcony, and enlarged sanctuary. In June of 1950, Rev. Franz accepted a call to Grace Mennonite Church in Albany.

⁵La Vernae J. Dick, "The Assimilation of American Culture by Early Dallas, Oregon, Mennonites" (a term paper while at Oregon College of Education, 1971), p. 21.

⁶H. D. Burkholder, The Story of Our Conference and Churches (North Newton: The Mennonite Press, 1951), p. 8.

⁷Anniversary Booklet

Other pastors who have served Emmanuel are Daniel J. Unruh, 1940-1943; John R. Turnbull, 1943-1944; Wilbert A. Regier, 1944-1952; Frank Harder, 1953-1957; and Allan R. Tschiegg, 1953-1972.⁸ During the ministry of Rev. Tschiegg, Emmanuel experienced another period of growth. This saw the construction of a new education complex in 1964, and a new sanctuary in 1970.⁹

Emmanuel Mennonite Church, one of the three which organized the Pacific District Conference, though a rural church which has had slow, but steady growth, looks forward to a continuation in the future. The Pratum area is growing with people getting out into the country a short distance from Salem. The congregation is missions-minded and has seen a number of men and women go into the ministry and mission fields during its history -- a half dozen in the past few years. The present membership of the church is two hundred and sixty-six.¹⁰

Grace Mennonite Church, Dallas

Grace Mennonite Church grew out of the Zion Mennonite church which was officially organized in 1896, as a country church about three miles northeast of Dallas, in the area known as Polk Station. There had been Mennonites

⁸Ibid.

⁹Mrs. Grover Welty in response to author's questionnaire.

¹⁰Minutes of the Pacific District Conference Session, June, 1972, p. 18.

in the area as early as 1882, and others came to live in the Mennonite community. Such were the Russian immigrants who came about 1890, from other parts of the United States and Canada, having been part of some eighteen thousand Mennonites who left the Ukraine in the 1870's. However, in 1891, most of those earlier Mennonites in Dallas dismantled their church and moved to Lane County, Oregon, where they remained a few years before moving to Ritzville, Washington. About this time, as more and more Russian immigrant Mennonites arrived in the area, they decided to hold a Sunday School at the Polk Station. It was this group that was represented at the first Pacific District meeting in 1896. The few Mennonite Brethren (a different denomination of Mennonites) who remained in the area joined them in worshipping at Polk Station. They had no minister so the men took turns reading sermons from two sermon books.¹¹ They used high German for their services and usually spoke low German in the home.

The formal organization of the Zion Mennonite Church took place following the formation of the Pacific District Conference in May of 1896. In 1897, Isaac Dyck donated a piece of property so that a church could be erected. In 1898, the church was incorporated. It was in 1898 that H. A. Bachman assumed the pastoral responsibilities

¹¹La Vernae J. Dick, "A History of the Grace Mennonite Church" (Written for the seventy-fifth anniversary, 1971,) p. 2.

following Peter Gerig.¹² Because transportation to the church was difficult (it was either on foot or horse-back) a fellowship meal was sometimes held following church and Sunday School, and then a prayer meeting was held in the afternoon.¹³

Bachman ministered until 1900, when he became minister at large for the Pacific District Conference. After an unsuccessful try at returning to laymen-read sermons, Isaac Dyck (himself a layman) was ordained in 1903, and served as pastor until the summer of 1908.¹⁴ He was followed from 1909 to 1919 by John P. Neufelt. In 1918, after serious deliberation (and some encouragement by a local vigilante committee), the congregation voted to hold the worship services in English, though they still conducted the business meetings in German.¹⁵ (German speaking people who did not mix well socially were not held in high esteem by many Americans at this time, the last years of World War I). Rev. Bernhard Janzen from Oklahoma served the church until 1923, when Rev. John Franz from Bloomfield, Montana, was called. He left in 1926 to take a charge at Pratum. In the early 1900's, many of the Mennonites were moving from the country into the city. In 1928, the Pacific District

¹²Berkholder, op. cit., p. 9

¹³Dick, op. cit., p. 3.

¹⁴Ibid.; Burkholder gives 12/21/04 as Dyck's ordination and 1907 as his resignation.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 4.

Conference and the General Conference suggested that the church move its facilities into Dallas. The congregation was split, but a trial period of six months was set upon. The "fleece" was ten new members in that time. They were gained, and the church stayed. Their services were conducted in the Adventist church which burned later that year. Not all of the members were happy about the move, and some returned to the country. However, when they could not get a pastor, they decided to reunite with the group meeting in town (about 1933 or 1934).

The group meeting in town could not afford to change the incorporation papers of the Zion Mennonite Church to a new church in town, so they reorganized under a new name -- Grace Mennonite -- and bought an old house from the city for \$300.00 with \$3.00 monthly payments. B. M. Beargan was called to serve as pastor.¹⁶ He was followed by H. E. Widmer, under whose ministry a basement auditorium was built at 207 Jefferson Street.¹⁷ He resigned in 1939. That year the Lord sent Homer Leisy, a Salem man with a flourishing drapery business. He sold the business, and on June 18, 1939, assumed charge of the Grace congregation.¹⁸ It was during the years of Leisy's ministry that Grace Mennonite Church began to grow.¹⁹ In 1937, the house in which they had been worshipping was torn down and the lumber used for

¹⁶Ibid. ¹⁷Burkholder, op. cit., p. 10.

¹⁸Ibid. ¹⁹Dick, op. cit., p. 5

a new church. Rev. Leisy died in June, 1948. Those who followed him were John Hiebert, Jacob J. Regier, Earl M. Peterson, John M. Franz, and H. D. Burkholder. Rev. Burkholder served five years and was followed by W. J. Flickinger. A split developed in the congregation, and in 1965, Rev. Flickinger and some of the members left Grace Church. Between him and Olin Krehbiel, who came in 1966, the church was served by J. J. Esau and J. R. Duerkson. The present pastor is Rev. Ted Fast, a former missionary in India.

In 1959, the first part of the present physical plant on Ellendale Road was completed. The new sanctuary was completed and dedicated in the fall of 1967.²⁰ The present membership is two hundred and ninety-seven, a figure which has remained steady for the past few years.²¹

The congregation of Grace Mennonite Church (formerly Zion) has weathered a couple severe storms in its history and remains faithful to her Lord. While there has been little growth for several years, and while some view the future rather pessimistically, there appears to be good potential and new life within the church. God has been merciful in the past and will continue to be so in the future.

²⁰Inid., pp. 5-6.

²¹Minutes of the Pacific District Conference Session June, 1972, p. 18.

Calvary Mennonite Church, Aurora

The Calvary Mennonite Church began on May 31, 1944, when a group of (Old) Mennonites and one of the more progressive pastors of their church met to discuss association with a different church organization.²² On June 6, the group received an invitation to join the General Conference Mennonite Church. A week later, a committee was chosen to investigate possible church sites, and Paul N. Roth was chosen as pastor of the group. On June 25, 1944, the first regular Sunday service was held in the former Barlow Christian Church, at Barlow, Oregon.²³ On August 6, the Calvary Mennonite Church was officially organized with fifty-two charter members, including one received by baptism. The group decided to buy the Christian Church for a total of \$500.00, which included the piano and song books, and in August the first \$100.00 was paid.²⁴

The church has enjoyed continual and steady growth from its beginning, as witnessed by their many building programs. Already in December of 1945, it was decided to lengthen the church and put a basement under it. In January of 1946, the foyer and balcony were added in front and the basement below. In August of 1951, rest rooms and

²²Church Historical Records, pages not numbered.

²³"Calvary Church History", as compiled for dedication of new church building in 1972, one page.

²⁴Ibid.

a pastor's study were added to the back of the church. In April of 1957, the group purchased a parsonage and two additional lots adjacent to the church. Just a year later, they began building a new sanctuary building as an addition to the old building. This was completed in November, 1958. Then, in the summer of 1967, the congregation realized that the present facilities were too small once again and addition was impossible, so on July 27, four acres of land, on Aurora-Lone Elder Road, were purchased from Joe Hershberger for \$9,000.00. A year later an architect was retained for the new building. The new facility was dedicated on April 30, 1972.²⁵ As an example of the constant, steady growth, we have found membership figures as follows: In December, 1954 (after ten years) the membership was one hundred and thirty-eight, up eighty-six from the beginning. The next ten years showed a gain of twenty, bringing it to one hundred and fifty-eight. The following year it was up to one hundred and sixty-five, and in 1967, when it was decided the new church was needed, the membership was at one hundred and ninety-three. A year later it was two hundred and three, up another ten members. In 1969, the membership was two hundred and sixteen, and today it stands just above two hundred and forty.²⁶ Average Sunday attendance runs very close to that number, with many guests each week.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Church Historical Records.

As was the case in many Mennonite churches, the pastor's salary was below substance level. For instance, in the beginning, Rev. Roth's support was an offering taken once a month. Then in 1951, he received \$2,000.00. The salary was raised \$800.00 in 1954. The figures themselves are unimportant, but the idea of a fully supported pastor did not see fruition until after the new church was dedicated in 1972.

Calvary Mennonite Church has been served by relatively few pastors during its twenty-eight year history. Paul Roth served until 1956, when he accepted a call to Carlock, Illinois. Rev. Nobel Sack was the interim pastor until Rev. Henry D. Penner became the pastor in May of 1957. In October of 1959, Rev. Penner left and Dr. Sack again served as interim. On June 5, 1960, the congregation voted to call the present pastor, Harry Howard.²⁷ Then, in 1967, Rick Gydesen was called as youth pastor. He later went into Youth For Christ work.²⁸

Though the church was organized in 1944, it did not adopt a constitution until January of 1949, and was not incorporated until the fall of 1958.²⁹

The congregation of Calvary Mennonite church has remained a close, though growing, family through the years.

²⁷Calvary Church History, compiled.

²⁸Church Historical Records

²⁹Ibid.

There have been some difficult times as there are in most situations where people are involved. The only real problem experienced within the congregation has been some friction over whether to build bigger facilities or parent a new church when the attendance made the facilities too small in 1967. The church also experienced a degree of the charismatic movement at this time. There was neither open rejection nor acceptance, and those involved left the fellowship quietly.

One of the real unifying factors of the congregation has been music. There has been a choir from the beginning. Then in 1961, a junior choir was organized, and in 1969, the teen choir took shape.³⁰ These choirs not only sing at the regular services, but at special Christmas and Easter services and services in other churches and rest homes, etc. At present, these choirs involve about fifty people from the young to the old. Another unifying factor of the congregation has been its emphasis on family involvement. All the congregation's activities are planned so that the whole family is involved and may come and go as a unit. Besides the normal auxiliary organizations (youth groups, ladies missionary groups, and men's fellowship), the church has added a tape ministry, which gets tapes of the services into the homes of shut-ins, both members and friends of the congregation.

³⁰Ibid.

With the unity and programs which now exist and the rapidly growing bedroom community which is springing up around the church, the future of Calvary Mennonite Church looks rosy.

Alberta Community Mennonite Church, Portland

The Alberta church (so named for the area of Portland in which it is located) came about as a joint venture of the Pacific District Conference and the General Conference. The agreement was that the Pacific District would maintain the work if the Home Missions Board of the General Conference would provide a worker for the field or contribute as their funds would permit. This was in 1927.³¹ The woman who was sent to Portland in the summer of 1928 to carry on this work was Miss Catherine Niswander. She had had fourteen years of experience in the Mennonite Mission in Chicago, so was well qualified for this work.³²

Miss Niswander started Sunday School classes in a store building at N.E. 26th and Alberta Streets. The first services were held there on December 16, 1928, and regular meetings until the following summer, when their first church building became available.³³ In 1931, the church joined the Pacific District Conference and on June 29 of that year was officially organized as the Alberta Community Church,

³¹Burkholder, p. 12

³²Ibid., p. 13 ³³Ibid.

with ten charter members. These were: Lena Leisy, Catherine Niswander, Mr. and Mrs. William S. Bartel, Mrs. C. P. Zook, Edna May Gunn, Louise Betty Gunn, Wilma Krug, Florence Hicks, and Cora Peck.³⁴

In June, 1939, the Home Missions Board purchased the building in which the group had been meeting, and during the summer the members excavated the basement and re-decorated the building. The building was dedicated to God for worship and service on September 25, 1939.³⁵

Pastors serving the church were Rev. Day, a Baptist minister, 1930-1935 (supply); Rev. Albert Classe, 1933-1935; several supply pastors, including Dr. Edward Mott from 1935-1937; Rev. Edmund Miller, 1937-1940; Rev. Arnold Regier until 1943; Rev. Herman Wiebe, 1943-1945, while a student at Western Conservative Baptist Theological Seminary in Portland; Rev. Clyde Dirks, 1945-1951; Rev. James Braga, as supply for nine months into 1952; Rev. Farry Albrecht, 1952-1959; Rev. Samuel Ediger, 1959-1961, as interim; Dr. Nobel V. Sack, 1961-1969 (a rather long interim, while teaching at Western Evangelical Seminary in Jennings Lodge); Melvin Williams, 1970; Dr. Sack again as interim until the present pastor, Rev. Elmer R. Friesen came in 1971.³⁶

The church carried on its ministry on the corner of N.E. 23rd and Sumner until 1964, when the steady and con-

³⁴Church Directory, 1966 (contains a one page historical summary).

³⁵Burkholder, p. 13. ³⁶Church Directory

sistent growth promised to tax the facilities. Within the year, it was apparent that larger facilities were needed and such became available when the Alberta Evangelical United Brethren Church was offered for sale. It was purchased for \$50,000, and the first service in this building was held on April 11, 1965, with the dedication service on June 27.³⁷

The church is experiencing many of the problems common to the inner-city church. The older members are passing on, and the younger families are scattered throughout the Portland area. The ministry in the community is not all that it could be if the members lived in the community. However, in 1970, a youth center was established in the church and has been making some progress. Along with this, a Bible story time for younger children of the community was begun and is finding even more success. The community is racially mixed, with an increasing black population, which increases the church-community relations gap. There are several churches in the area, many of which are experiencing the same type of problem. The membership of the Alberta Community Church fluctuates between seventy and ninety, with the present membership at eighty-five and an average attendance of fifty to sixty.³⁸

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Conversation with an active churchmember, Mrs. Stan Anderson.

The church is receiving financial support from the Pacific District at this time and needs much prayer support on the part of her sister churches during these days.

Sweet Home Community Chapel, Sweet Home,

For at least two years, there has been much talk and excitement about this little church in the logging area south of the Willamette Valley. The church was begun as a mission project at the suggestion of P. A. Kliwer, who for some years had canvassed the Foster-Sweet Home area, and the Evangelization Committee (now Home Missions Committee). Foster was a small, but growing, community, owing its growth to a recently (c. 1948) constructed lumber mill with a bountiful supply of timber.³⁹ The Evangelization Committee found it impossible to purchase a site in Foster, so they turned to Sweet Home, where they purchased an acre and a tenth from Mr. Ward D. and Mary Smith on November 10, 1948.⁴⁰

The first pastor to come to Sweet Home was Alfred Schwartz of Monroe, Washington. He affirmed that this was God's call on his life and began the work with children's classes and home visitation. On June 15, 1950, a new block chapel, constructed by the district men's fellowship, was dedicated, and on May 30, 1951, Sweet Home organized as a church with thirty-one members.⁴¹ This gain of thirty-one

³⁹Burkholder, p. 20. ⁴⁰Ibid., p. 21

⁴¹Minutes of the Pacific District Conference Session, 1951.

members in two years was an excellent start for a church in a difficult area, an area inhabited by loggers and lumber men, men not known for their religious peity. Before the church was built, services had been held in the parsonage.

As the work continued, Rev. Schwartz was succeeded by Rev. Peter Peters. In 1963, Rev. A. C. Siebert became the pastor. In 1966, the iterim pastor was Don Emmert. He was followed by Richard Gydesen of Pratum, Oregon. After a brief stay, he was succeeded by the present pastor, Larry Sloan, in 1968. The membership statistics are extremely interesting. During the first eight years the membership stayed in the forties. Then in 1959, it jumped to sixty-two, in 1960, to seventy-three, and in 1961, reached eighty-eight.⁴² From then until 1966 there was a steady decrease. In that year, there was a sudden drop from sisty-one to thirty, and again a loss the following year. After Rev. Sloan came in 1968, we see the reason for the excitement over this church. The recorded membership for the last four years is as follows: 1969, thirty-four members; 1970, fifty-two members; 1971, sixty-three members;⁴³ and October 1972, seventy members with an attendance of one hundred and fifty.⁴⁴

⁴²Minutes of the Pacific District Conference Session, 1961.

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⁴⁴Response to author's Questionnaire, October, 1972.

Under Larry Sloan's leadership, this church, which had been going steadily down hill, has received a fresh blessing from God and has grown into a dynamic Christian fellowship. During this time, the old facilities were outgrown, and the congregation was able to purchase the former Assembly of God Church with attached parsonage in 1971. The parsonage, which has four bedrooms, family room, etc., will be turned into Sunday School space as more room is needed. The sanctuary will seat about three hundred and fifty worshippers.⁴⁵ This church is now receiving aid from the district Home Missions Committee to help support their pastor, but they are very faithful in making payments on the loan to buy the church building. These people are not very wealthy, and many of the members are youth under the age of twenty-five, who have turned to Christ from drugs and are now working as they can in the area.

From this small church have gone two ministers. Given the present spiritual life of the church, this author looks for many more in the years to come. When asked about the future of the church, the member filling in the questionnaire responded as follows: "We have a pastor who has a great concern in outreach, and the people are backing the pastor in prayer and visitation. The group of young people show a great concern and there is no generation gap here."⁴⁶ In short, the future of Sweet Home Community Chapel is very

⁴⁵Ibid. ⁴⁶Ibid.

optimistic. As one thinks of our Lord's command to go into all nations and preach the gospel he might well wonder whether this statement by Harold Burkholder does not, in some part, give a clue to the growing success of Sweet Home Community Chapel: "This is the first Pacific District Conference project to be primarily established in the interest of non-Mennonite people."⁴⁷

These are the five churches of the Pacific District Conference in the state of Oregon, the first three covered began as regular congregations and the last two began as mission projects and are still receiving aid from the district. Next, we shall examine the histories of the churches in Washington.

THE WASHINGTON CHURCHES

Because the Mennonites have traditionally been farming people, many of them moved to Washington when cheap land became available. Again they endeavored to settle in communities, so that today we find a few rural areas dominated by the Mennonite people, the centers of which are the churches where these people worship. There are at present six Mennonite churches in Washington affiliated with the General Conference, and also the Pacific District Conference.

Menno Mennonite Church, Ritzville

The history of the Menno church had its beginning in

⁴⁷Burkholder, p. 21

Freeman, South Dakota, just prior to 1880. Mennonites from Russia had immigrated there in 1874, and organized the Salem Mennonite Church, with Jacob R. Schrag and Joseph Kaufman elected as ministers. A schism soon occurred, and the group which followed Schrag organized the Zion church. This group was attracted to the Pacific Northwest, and during the years 1887-1889, migrated to the Dallas, Oregon, area.⁴⁸ A congregation was organized there with Schrag as pastor. They worshipped in North Dallas. For some unknown reason, this group, in 1891, dismantled their church and moved by rail to Lane County, near Eugene, Oregon.⁴⁹ Other families from South Dakota and Kansas moved to that area in 1891, also.

While at Eugene, this congregation participated in the first session of the Pacific Northwest churches, at which time the Pacific District Conference was formed (1896). The second conference session, in 1897, was held at the Eugene church.⁵⁰

These people, however, were not satisfied with the farming conditions in Lane County and soon were moving again, this time to Adams county in Washington. Pioneering new

⁴⁸P. C. Jantz, "History of the Menno Mennonite Church" (a paper written for the church, c. 1950), pages not numbered.

⁴⁹Dick, "Early Mennonites in Oregon," p. 29; an interview with Mrs. Dick, November 26, 1972.

⁵⁰Minutes of the Pacific District Conference Session 1897 (as translated from the German).

farm land was one attraction in Washington. Family tie was another, since some Mennonite men in the Adams County area had taken their brides from the Mennonite families at Eugene.⁵¹ So the years 1889 and 1900 saw them migrating once more, this time by covered wagon. They went in three major groups, the first group making the journey in eighteen days. After helping with the harvest there, most of them filed homesteads in the area some twenty miles northwest of Lind, an area which became known as Menno. A Post Office was set up in the home of Rev. J. R. Schrag and across the road from it the Graber store to keep the pioneers in supplies.⁵² During 1902-1903, other Mennonite families from Beatrice, Nebraska, and Marion, South Dakota, settled in the Menno community.

In all these busy pioneering days, religious services were not sacrificed.. At first they met in homes, then in the Menno District school building. Then in the year 1907, it was considered wise by the people to build a church building. This was built on the northeast corner of the Peter Gering property. Mr. Gering was the head carpenter. This building was dedicated November 22, 1908. This church served as the group's house of worship until 1950, when the present structure was erected. During this time, also, the church was actively involved in the Pacific District Conference and held the sessions there in 1903 (in the school

⁵¹Jantz, op. cit. ⁵²Ibid.

house) and in 1909 (in the new church).⁵³

With the influx of Mennonite settlers and the growth of the geographical area which they covered, those as far away as Ruff and Tiflis decided to organize their own congregation. This they did in 1910. In 1911, they received fifteen new members by baptism, and in 1918, they erected a church building, having previously met in the Ruff and Tiflis schools. They called themselves the Salem Mennonite Church. This building was used until 1930, when the area was caught in a severe depression due to crop failure. Finally, in 1934, the congregation dissolved and joined the Menno group. (It is interesting that some of these people were from the Salem Mennonite church in Freeman, South Dakota, from which the present Menno congregation originally separated.) The Salem Mennonite Church building was sold to the Assembly of God group in the area.⁵⁴

The pastors who have served the Menno congregation are Rev. J. R. Schrag, 1887-1911; John Waltner (interim); D. D. King, 1913-1914 and 1922-1928; D. B. Hess, 1916-1918; M. J. Galle, 1919-1922 and 1928-1938; E. J. Miller, 1940-1946; W. W. Wiebe, 1947-1955; Paul Boschman, 1950-1951 (associate); Lester Janzen, 1956-1963; Harris Waltner, 1963 to the present. During the depression years, financial hardships led to the sharing of pastor Galle with the English Congregational church in Odessa. In 1938, he transferred

⁵³Ibid. ⁵⁴Ibid., p. 2.

on a full time basis to that church.⁵⁵

A current problem area in the Menno congregation is the declining active membership. "A brief survey of the families listed in our church records show 32 active families, 7 families of older members who are unable to attend services, 58 non-resident families."⁵⁶ Though there is still financial support from many it is difficult to carry on much of a program without people actively involved. A part of this problem is the loss of the college-trained people to more urban areas of the country. However, this lack of active membership has had some good effect in that it has forced the people to reach out into the community. This they are doing and are finding families to join the fellowship and work actively in the church. In spite of this, some see the future as "unstable" because of the future of the family farm.⁵⁷ They are hoping for an influx of people in response to the coming of deep-well irrigation which was introduced a few years ago. This has not occurred during the past six years, and one wonders if it will in the future. Yet with an increased emphasis on meeting the needs in the community and on the fellowship of the church, a congregation the size of the Menno church can still look forward to a prosperous future.

⁵⁵Mrs. V. Franz, response to the author's questionnaire.

⁵⁶Ibid. ⁵⁷Ibid.

Monroe Community Chapel, Monroe

What is now the community chapel is the result of a merger in 1970 of the First Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Country Church, the latter having split away from First in 1945. We shall treat both churches separately, and as one, in this section.⁵⁸

The work in this area began when five Mennonite families and one single man, a group of twenty-seven persons, came to Monroe from Pretty Prairie, Kansas, on September 19, 1911. Their first endeavors were those of the pioneer -- clearing land and building homes. They did, however, establish a Sunday School immediately, holding it in various homes. They had only one teacher available.

It was not until 1918 that a church was formally organized. This occurred on April 22, with the help of P. R. Aeschliman, who became the group's first minister. The following year the First Mennonite Church of Monroe was admitted into the Pacific District Conference. There were thirty-three charter members in 1918.

The early days of the church saw various ministers come and go. Rev. S. S. Baumgartner came to help Rev. Aeschliman. A Baptist minister from Startup, Washington,

⁵⁸All information regarding Mennonite Community Chapel and First Mennonite Church of Monroe is from information supplied by Homer Flickinger, secretary of the church council, in response to the author's questionnaire. Information concerning Mennonite Country Church was supplied by Marlene York, former member of that church.

came often to assist, and late in the summer of 1912 the Rev. D. D. King moved with his family to the community and served the church for six months. Other pastors who have served the church are J. M. Franz for a year, followed by J. D. buller for two years. Rev. P. A. Kliever came in 1924 and stayed until 1929, followed by S. S. Baumgartner, 1930-1936. Rev. M. M. Lehman served from 1937-1945 and was followed by George W. Kopper from 1945-1967. Rev. Frank Ewart came in the spring of 1968 and stayed until February of 1971. The present pastor, Riley Rinks, came in August, 1971.

For quite some time in the early years, the church was without a building of its own. They rented the Swedish Mission Covenant Church for a time. The building on the corner of Lewis and McDougal streets was acquired in 1922, and was remodeled in 1945. There have been several improvements throughout the years "to provide a pleasing and worshipful appearance...."

The church has always been actively interested and involved in missions work, both through projects undertaken at the church and through members of the church who have gone into various fields of service. These number about fourteen at the present time, some in other countries and some within the United States (in Arizona and Alaska). Others have also participated in the voluntary service programs of the Mennonite Central Committee.

In 1944, a division occurred in the church, the

result of which was the formation on June 14, 1944, of the Mennonite Country Church. It was so named because the group chose to worship in the rural area of Monroe, meeting first in a community hall. A church was built in 1946. This work was begun by Rev. John L. McNabb, Mrs. Cara Scott and Lloyd Redden. Over the years, the church did not experience much growth, an increase of about seventy in a twenty-five year period (which is not really keeping up with population increase). Therefore, in 1970, meetings began to explore the possibility of reuniting the two groups. As a result of these meetings and much work, the two churches were finally able to merge under the new name Monroe Community Chapel, in February of 1971.

The church is an active one, with Women's Missionary Fellowship, Christian Endeavor, Youth Group, and a Pioneer Girls program, which is in its first year. The ministry of Rev. Rinks has proved to be a real spiritual influence, and the church is now quite crowded. A new worship and educational complex on a new site is being planned. When this is completed, the congregation looks forward to increased interest and growth.

Spring Valley Mennonite Church, Newport

This church dates back to 1922, when several Mennonite refugees from Russia settled in the Newport area. Their first religious service was conducted by Rev. Aeschliman of the Colfax church in 1924. After the arrival of more Mennonite settlers, the Union Agency (land company)

constructed a place of worship for them.⁵⁹ The group came to the attention of the Home Mission Board of the General Conference in 1926.

In 1928, the congregation was officially organized with sixteen charter members. Rev. J. J. Kliever of Burrton, Kansas, became their first pastor and remained until 1938, when he was succeeded by P. D. Unruh. During Rev. Kliever's ministry, the congregation was accepted into the Pacific District Conference (1930) and the General Conference (1933).⁶⁰ In 1941, under the leadership of Rev. Unruh, the old building was dismantled and a new one begun. This saw completion in 1946, with dedication on June 16 of that year.⁶¹

In 1947, Rudolph Schmidt of Oklahoma accepted the call of the church and moved to Newport. During the first part of his ministry, a parsonage was built for the pastor and his family. Several of the members contributed enough logs for the lumber necessary, and many others donated labor.⁶²

Total membership of the church has not grown much over the years. Newport is located in Pend Oreille County, which is one of the poorest parts of the state. Consequently jobs are hard to find, and the young usually move to other areas rather than settle near home. This fact has not,

⁵⁹Burkholder, p. 31.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 32.

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Ibid.

however, proved a total hindrance to the people of Spring Valley. They are faithful mission supporters and have two missionaries presently in the field. Also, four ministers have come out of their congregation, though they were attending other churches prior to attending seminary.⁶³

In spite of the work shortage and the difficulty of maintaining Mennonite population, the work is going forward at the Spring Valley church. The future is optimistic, as the people have been getting out into the community, into the unchurched homes, and finding very encouraging results.⁶⁴ The present membership is sixty-two.⁶⁵

Glendale Mennonite Church, Lynden

When Mennonite settlements became over-populated, or when people in one area became dissatisfied, they moved to a new land. This is the case of those who are responsible for the formation of the Glendale Mennonite Church. It began with seven families from Deer Park, Washington, and seven or eight families from other areas⁶⁶ (originally from Kansas, Oklahoma, Montana, California, and Mexico).⁶⁷ This

⁶³Mrs. A. Goertzen, in response to the author's questionnaire.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Minutes of the Pacific District Conference Session, June, 1972, p. 18.

⁶⁶Burkholder, p. 35.

⁶⁷Kent F. Reimer, "The Glendale Mennonite Church" (a paper prepared for Christian Ministries II class at Philadelphia School of the Bible, 1972), p. 1.

particular migration began in the early 1940's. In the fall of 1944, J. M. Franz, itinerant minister of the Pacific District, visited the group and conducted services in their homes. On November 1, they assembled at the Hy Dick home and elected F. D. Koehn to serve as their spiritual leader. At that meeting they also decided to organize a congregation and purchase a suitable building.⁶⁸

On January 1, 1945, a business committee was appointed to secure a building in which to worship.⁶⁹ They purchased a small school house one fourth mile north of Berthusen Park for \$400.00. Shortly thereafter, the Glendale School (a two-room school house) became available and the group placed a successful sealed bid of \$2500.00. They then sold the smaller structure for \$600.00 and the teacherage from the Glendale property for \$200.00, making \$800.00 toward their new purchase.⁷⁰ This purchase was made possible through the Home Mission Board of the General Conference. The new church was dedicated on February 25, 1945, with two hundred and fifty people assembled for the occasion. Among the guests were conference leaders from Washington and Oregon and the entire congregation of the Mennonite Brethren Church from nearby Point Whiehorn (near Blain). This group brought a \$250.00 gift for the new Glendale congregation.⁷¹

⁶⁸Burkholder, p. 35 ⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Reimer, p. 3. ⁷¹Burkholder, p. 36.

Now that they had a building, the people officially organized the Glendale Mennonite Church on February 28, 1945. There were twenty-two charter members. On that date, also, the existing temporary church board was asked to serve another year. A similar request was made to the Sunday School superintendent and their spiritual leader, brother Koehn.⁷²

On April 9, 1945, the congregation voted to unite with the General Conference and the Pacific District Conference. The new church was accepted by both organizations in June of that same year.⁷³

In April, 1947, Koehn resigned. The church board carried on until Rev. Daniel Toavs came from Wolfpoint, Montana, in October. During his ministry, a constitution was drawn up and adopted (March 1, 1948), and the church was incorporated (1950).⁷⁴ The next pastor, Rev. Myron Hilty, came in October, 1951. During his ministry many old quarrels were patched up, the church rented a parsonage, and a Church of God building was purchased and moved (piano, seats, stove, and song books for \$500) to the Glendale site. This addition was used for the Sunday School. It was joined to the main building in 1956 during the ministry of Daniel G. Regier, who came in the spring of 1955. Also during his term, the church built a parsonage. It was dedicated in September, 1957. In 1961, J. Tilitsky served as interim pastor until Rev. John P. Suderman arrived in December. In

⁷²Ibid. ⁷³Burkholder, op. cit. ⁷⁴Ibid.

1967, Rev. J. P. Wiebe served as interim until the coming of Rev. Emil Krahn on September 8, 1968. Rev. Paul N. Roth followed him as interim for three months.⁷⁵ The pastor now serving the Glendale congregation is Merle Kauffman, having begun in June, 1972, after graduating from seminary.

Since the church prefers baptism by immersion, the Gulf of Georgia, an ocean bay on Puget Sound, was used for baptism. The first baptism was held on July 29, 1945. The church now uses the baptistry of a nearby Baptist church if the person wishes immersion.⁷⁶

Age has taken its toll on the original buildings used by the congregation. Mice were becoming a problem in storage, and there were no indoor rest rooms. Therefore, in February, 1970, a membership poll was taken to decide what course of action should be taken. The people elected to build an educational wing with rest rooms and social hall. This was done that year with the able guidance of Mr. Orville Troyer, a contractor from Hesston, Kansas.⁷⁷ The congregation now worships in the social hall and plans to build a new sanctuary only when growth demands it. It was said of this building that it "was erected in the traditional Mennonite way -- that is, everyone helped. The resulting building is typically Mennonite -- rather plain, most practical, and almost totally functional".⁷⁸

Though the growth rate is nothing spectacular, the

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 5. ⁷⁶Ibid., p. 7. ⁷⁷Ibid. p. insert #1

⁷⁸Ibid.

congregation has grown. The church began with twenty-two members. Today there are eight-five. The high was one hundred and seven in 1968, but there was a decline due primarily to a schism which developed in full in 1971, a schism between the "long term members and the Kansas people ...differences in opinion as to how the church should be run."⁷⁹ In that year, the pastor's confidence vote failed, and a portion of the older members left the church. The group which remained united, gained spiritually and achieved a new perspective for the church. The pastor's prognosis for the future is excellent. There are many new homes begin built in the area and there is not another church with four miles in any direction.

Warden Mennonite Church, Warden

The Mennonite church in Warden is a rather recent addition to the Pacific District Conference. This work opened directly as a result of the fact that so many Mennonite people are farmers. When irrigation came to the Warden area, a number of Mennonite families located there in 1954 and 1955.⁸⁰ Others soon followed. These people began worshipping in their homes. When one of the families built a new house they were willing to have the group use

⁷⁹Rev. Merle Kauffman, personal correspondence to the author.

⁸⁰Most of the information for this section was supplied in a brief historical sketch found in the program used at the church dedication, November, 1970.

their basement for worship. This became the regular temporary meeting place, after much prayerful consideration and encouragement from the Pacific District Conference. In April, an organizational meeting was held and the name "Warden Mennonite Church" was chosen as the official name for the congregation. In July of that year, Wilbur Schmidt became the pastor of this new congregation.

The good people of the Menno church at Ritzville caught the vision of this new church, and with the encouragement of their pastor, the late William Wiebe, a number of them gave generously to the Warden group. The late Julius Franz of the Menno congregation aided in the securing of about six acres of land on the east edge of Warden. It was purchased from the Milwaukee Railroad and incorporated into the town as the "Menno Addition."

In September of 1957, construction was begun on a structure. The plan was to finish a basement structure first, and that was finished by December so that the Christmas services were held in it. This the congregation used as the church until 1969, when the super-structure was built. During this time, the congregation built a parsonage (1960).

Pastors who have served the people at Warden following the ministry of Wilbur Schmidt were Gordon Dyck, the summer of 1958; Rudolph Schmidt, from October 1958 to 1960; James Gingerich from 1960 to 1965; Herbert King, 1965-1967, and the present pastor, Rev. Frank Horst.

The congregation had a slow, steady growth from

twenty in 1957 to fifty-one in 1967, when three families moved away and membership dropped to thirty-eight. As of October, 1972, the membership is fifty-two. Though the church is yet small, the pastor feels it has made good progress, especially in "open-heartedness and open doors to people of other denominational and religious backgrounds."⁸¹ Brother Horst feels that the greatest problem has been moving "from isolated Mennonite philosophy toward becoming a brotherhood acceptable to and accepted by the community while maintaining a clear Christian witness."⁸² Reports are encouraging in this area and the prognosis for the years to come is for both spiritual and numerical growth so long as the people maintain the continuing vision of outreach and community service for Christ.

South Seattle Mennonite Church, Seattle

With the increaseing mobility of our society, many Mennonites are finding their ways into life in the city rather than the usual life on the farm. The South Seattle Mennonite Church is the result of this move to the city.

On November 6, 1966, four families met at the Darryll Graber home to discuss the possibility of a Mennonite church in the south Seattle area.⁸³ In January, 1967, the group

⁸¹Rev. Frank Horst, response to author's questionnaire.

⁸²Ibid.

⁸³The information for this section was furnished by Rev. Milton Harder in response to the author's questionnaire.

started to meet in homes on Sunday mornings for Sunday School. As there was no pastor, they attended worship services at local churches. In August, 1967, the group was able to purchase the Angle Lake Shore Club building for a very reasonable price and began to meet in that building. The congregation continues to meet in this building.

The South Seattle Mennonite Church -- Church of the Sermon on the Mount was officially founded on October 27, 1968. The church became a member of the Pacific District Conference in 1969, though Rev. Milton Harder represented the church at the 1968 session. The church had five charter member families: Mr. and Mrs. Darryll Graber, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Nachtigal and three children, Mr. and Mrs. James Unruh and two children, Mr. and Mrs. Archie Faul and Mr. and Mrs. Fay McGrew and their four children -- a total of nineteen. This group called Milton J. Harder in June of 1968. (The Harders also became charter members, making the total twenty-one).

The life of this new church has not been without difficulties. The membership increased to thirty-two the second year, but in the third year the membership decreased, due primarily to economic problems in the Seattle area when the largest industry here layed off several thousands of employees. Other personal problems also played a small part in this decrease. By the fourth year, only one of the original charter-member families remained, along with the pastor and his family. This became a rebuilding year.

There are certain problems peculiar to the very small congregation, and the South Seattle church is no exception. New "members" (there is no constitution yet, so no definition as to what constitutes a member) have come from varied Mennonite and non-Mennonite backgrounds "with varied expectations concerning the nature of the church. It has not been possible to harmonize all of these expectations." The other problem, perhaps most peculiar to the small urban church, is the great distances away from the church which the members live, making travel to the church more than once per week objectionable. During the summer months, the weekends also take their tolls. With such a small congregation, those who are absent from the fellowship are sorely missed.

The present congregation is very active concerning some issues which touch particular Mennonite traditions, specifically peace and social concern and interest in voluntary service. A volunteer service unit has been established in Seattle, though still quite temporary. It is hoped more work might be found and a house established on a more permanent basis. Here, again, distance from the down-town area is a factor, but one which can be overcome with concern on both sides. The volunteer service unit has added much to the congregation. Also, the average age of the congregation is quite young, which has both advantages and disadvantages. Its greatest advantage is in growth potential. There is growth potential in the immediate area as there is no other church in the immediate

community. Pastor Harder has been in active contact with many people in the community, and some are beginning to relate to the church. Brother Harder continues to serve the congregation with the assistance of the Pacific District Conference at this writing, though it appears that he will be leaving the pulpit in the spring of 1973.

THE IDAHO CHURCH

First Mennonite Church, Aberdeen

Mennonites who formed this church came from many areas of this country -- California, Illinois, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, the Dakotas, Ohio, Oklahoma and Washington -- as well as from Canada. They came to Idaho because of over-crowded conditions and high-priced land where they were living. In Idaho, they could homestead farm land for free (in the early years). Thus, when, in 1905, some literature was sent to Newton describing a new irrigation tract which was to be opened for settlement somewhere between American Falls and Blackfoot, Idaho, some Mennonite "scouts" came to assess the situation. These were Henry Toevs, John Toevs, Will Bartel, Michael Wenger, F. B. Wedel, and G. A. Bartel.⁸⁴ They filed claims and returned home with a favorable report to settle their affairs there. By the fall of 1906, a number of families had come to the

⁸⁴"The History of the First Mennonite Church," as compiled for the fiftieth anniversary in 1957, p. 2.

community. They erected tents and other primitive shelters, which in many instances were used for a number of years.⁸⁵

On the first Sunday of October, 1906, the first Sunday School was held in a tent on a plot of ground adjoining the Aberdeen town site. Later meetings were held in the homes of Henry Hege and Samuel Hunsinger. Rev. Jacob Hege from Wisner, Nebraska, arrived in the late spring of 1907 and conducted the preaching services.⁸⁶

The continuous influx of Mennonite settlers made it necessary to seek a larger building in which to worship. So, in 1907, a frame building was erected one and one-half miles south of Aberdeen. This was the school building and also served as the church. Shortly after this building was erected, the group officially organized a congregation, the Salem Mennonite Church, on July 4, 1907. The charter members numbered thirty-six.⁸⁷ Evidently the church became a member of the Pacific District Conference the same year.⁸⁸

When in 1909, Rev. and Mrs. John B. Baer moved into the area to settle on a farm, Rev. Baer was extended a call to serve the congregation, and he accepted. It was during his ministry (spring, 1910) that a new building was erected in town. This is the west part of the existing sanctuary. It is thirty-six by fifty-six feet and has a full basement. It was also during this time that the Emmanuel Mennonite

⁸⁵Ibid. ⁸⁶Ibid. ⁸⁷Ibid., p. 3

⁸⁸Rev. Aaron Epp, in response to the author's questionnaire.

church was organized. (See Chapter 3, p. 22.) Rev. Baer resigned in 1911. He was followed by Albert Pletz, a Baptist minister, until the fall of 1913, when one of the men of the congregation, Henry Toevs, accepted a call as evangelist.⁸⁹

In August, 1914, the church received its first full time pastor. Rev. E. J. Neuenschwander of Berne, Indiana, a new seminary graduate, assumed the responsibilities then. "Under his able leadership more enthusiasm was created for the Lord's work....From August 1914 to August 1920, eighty-two new members were added to the roll."⁹⁰ Also during his ministry, a new parsonage was constructed (which still gives excellent service). He resigned in 1920 to accept a call in South Dakota. The pastor whom he replaced, Rev. Edward D. Schmidt, came to serve in Aberdeen. Though he only stayed for a year and a half, he was responsible for getting the constitution put into conventional form.⁹¹

Rev. Menno J. Galle from Odessa, Washington, succeeded Rev. Schmidt in September of 1922 and ministered until 1928. He was followed by Rev. J. E. Kauman. It was during Rev. Kaufman's ministry that the Emmanuel Church dissolved and reunited with what was by now First Mennonite Church. He "was influential in helping to mould the interests of these two groups, so as to become one strong body in winning

⁸⁹"The History of First....," op. cit., p. 4

⁹⁰Ibid. ⁹¹Ibid.

immortal souls to Christ."⁹² Rev. Kauffman resigned in 1936.

In June of 1936, Rev. Phillip Wedel came from Kansas to serve the Aberdeen congregation. By 1938, the membership was up to three hundred-twenty. During Wedel's ministry the sanctuary proved too small and work was begun on an addition, thirty-six by seventy feet. Excavation was begun in 1930, and the concrete basement walls were poured the following spring, but the effect of the Depression was also felt in Aberdeen and no work was done for several years. Finally, the building was completed and dedicated in 1938. Rev. Wedel resigned in 1944. Interim pastor was Rev. H. J. Brown, a missionary from China, home on furlough. Rev. Henry Harder came in July, 1945.⁹³

Shortly thereafter, the congregation again found it necessary to make an addition to the church. In 1946, a fourteen by thirty-six foot addition was made to the south end of the original structure. This provided for a choir room and pastor's study upstairs and Sunday School room in the basement. Other accomplishments during the ministry of Rev. Harder, and in which he was instrumental were the founding of the First Mennonite Church of Caldwell and the Faith Memorial Church of Filer, Idaho.⁹⁴ In 1948, a large house adjoining the church to the south was purchased for additional Sunday School space. Two vacant lots were also

⁹²Ibid., p. 5.

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 8.

purchased for future use by the church.

Other pastors serving the congregation were Rudolf Toews, 1954-1955 (interim); Rev. Walter H. Dyck, 1956-1961; Rev. Wilfred Ulrich, 1962(63)-1968(69); Paul Roth, interim; and Rev. Aaron Epp, 1970 --.

The Aberdeen church has always been interested in missions and has seen many other number go into mission work or the ministry - at least eight ministers and thirteen missionaries. The list may not be complete for the early years.⁹⁵ There are also the usual auxiliaries in Aberdeen: Mennonite Men, Women's Mission Society (and two other similar circles for women of different ages), Dorcas Society for girls, and Christian Endeavor groups. The church also maintains its own camp grounds in the Palisades National Forest, not far from Jackson, Wyoming. Besides its own use, the camp sees many other groups of church young people and adults during the summer months.⁹⁶

Being a basically rural church in southeast Idaho presents certain problems for First Mennonite Church. One of these is that it is difficult to keep the young people, because employment is so limited. Another is that the population of the area is primarily Mormon and the Mennonite people have a rather complacent attitude concerning reaching them for Christ. Rev. Epp says, "We have really not

⁹⁵Rev. Aaron Epp, response to author's questionnaire.

⁹⁶Ibid.

effectively dealt with them. We try to walk among them and witness to the truth the best we know how."⁹⁷ Also, there are six other denominations represented in the small town of Aberdeen, including the Lutheran, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Assembly of God, and Plymouth Brethren. There have also been some very deep personal conflicts within the church and, in recent years, a rather high divorce rate, the reason for which is difficult to find. The personal conflicts and wounds are healing, as most do with time.

While the outlook for First Mennonite is not exceptional, neither is it bleak. God has been good to His church and will continue to maintain His witness through His faithful followers in Aberdeen.

THE ARIZONA CHURCH

First Mennonite Church, Phoenix

The only General Conference Mennonite Church in Arizona had its beginning as early as the 1950's, when Mrs. Ethel Rosenberger tried to contact various Mennonite families also living in Phoenix. There was some response. Then in 1961, the Clifford Taylors moved to Phoenix and were interested in starting a church. A letter was written to Rev. Lester Janzen, then president of the Pacific District Conference, and he in turn wrote to Walter Dyck, the chair-

⁹⁷Ibid.

man of the Home Missions Committee.⁹⁸

The group began meeting on Sunday evenings in homes. The first evening meeting was held on November 5, 1961. The average attendance at these meetings was eighteen. The fellowship was visited the last week of December, 1961, by Albert Epp, the secretary of the Home Missions Committee. Finding twenty-four adults and children interested, he concluded that it was time to act before interest and enthusiasm were lost.⁹⁹

Upon Rev. Epp's recommendation, the Pacific District Conference Home Missions Committee requested the Committee of City Churches of the General Conference to send Peter Ediger to Phoenix. He visited the group March 14-20, 1962, and spoke to the fellowship several times. He gave them valuable counsel for the initial steps in organization.¹⁰⁰ Shortly thereafter, on April 8, 1962, the Phoenix Mennonite Fellowship began having regular Sunday morning services. These were held in the home of Mrs. Rosenberger. There was a group of about forty persons, representing eleven families. The First Mennonite Church was accepted into the Pacific District Conference in June, 1962.

The group called their first pastor shortly. Rev. Eugene Eymann served from September, 1962, until September, 1963. During this time the congregation purchased an

⁹⁸"Yearbook of the First Mennonite Church, Phoenix, Arizona," 1964, pages not numbered.

⁹⁹Ibid. ¹⁰⁰Ibid.

estate property at 1612 W. Northern Avenue. It was an acre and a quarter with an older seven room house. After extensive cleaning and removal of years accumulation of rubbish, the house was remodeled for use as a church. Also during this time, six families left the fellowship, some because of their work and others over disagreements. Because of this, Albert Epp and Lester Janzen of the Pacific District Conference met with the remaining group to help them reorganize.¹⁰¹

On Sunday, February 10, 1963, the first members were officially accepted into the First Mennonite Church, though the official signing of Charter members was not held until January, 1964. There were sixteen signers.¹⁰² During that time, on September 1, 1963, Rev. Donavin Diller began a three-year appointment by the Pacific District Conference as the pastor. On September 8, 1964, a parsonage was purchased. Both the parsonage and the church property were made possible with loans from the Pacific District Conference and Church Extension Service of the General Conference.¹⁰³

Since that time, the First Mennonite Church of Phoenix was accepted into the General Conference (July, 1965). On December 19, 1965, ground was broken at the

¹⁰¹Ibid.

¹⁰²Foreword to the Constitution, revised and adopted January 5, 1972.

¹⁰³Ibid.

original site for a new church building. The corner stone was laid in February, 1966, and the dedication held in June of the same year. Also, in 1966, a constitution was¹⁰⁴ adopted.

The church has the usual Mennonite auxiliaries for the women, men, and young people. They have also established a voluntary service unit in Phoenix and are involved with some other Mennonite churches in the area in a retirement apartment complex now under construction. The future for the church in Phoenix is excellent, due to the popularity of the city and the influx of new people all the time. There are also many vacationers who come to the city and the First Mennonite Church attempts to minister to them while they are in the city. The present membership is seventy-six. We seek God's continued blessing on this growing field.

THE CALIFORNIA CHURCHES

First Mennonite Church, Paso Robles

The history of the First Mennonite Church of Paso Robles is that of two groups of people who were at one time one church, then two, and now one again. It involved both groups which were formed when the San Marcus church was dissolved in 1903. We can deal with that group until 1903, and after that we shall follow the history of the First Mennonite Church, or the town church. For information on

¹⁰⁴Constitution, op. cit.

the Second Mennonite Church (formerly the Willow Creek Church) refer to page 29 in chapter three, "Extinct Pacific District Conference Churches."

In 1896, Jacob E. Classen and Rev. Jacob Hege traveled from Nebraska to California to look for farming country for their families and others.¹⁰⁵ Rev. Hege's son-in-law in Los Angeles put him in touch with a land agent who had thousands of acres for sale in the San Luis Obispo County. Because of the excellent wheat crops that year, the land near Estrella (east of San Miguel) appealed to Hege and he settled there.¹⁰⁶ Mr. Classen preferred the land west of San Miguel on land that was known as the "Godfrey Ranch." He settled there.¹⁰⁷ More families followed these in 1897 and 1898, some settling in each area.

In the fall of 1897, the two settlements organized one congregation with Rev. Jacob Hege as elder and Rev. A. J. Wiebe as assistant preacher. At first they held services in homes, then in the Welsona school building about half way between the two settlements.¹⁰⁸ In the fall of 1898, a church building was built on the San Marcus ranch, west of San Miguel but south east of the Godfrey Ranch and

¹⁰⁵Mrs. Louis Bergman, an untitled article on the history of First Mennonite Church, with emphasis on Willow Creek Church. no date. pages not numbered.

¹⁰⁶Gus Toevs, "History of the First Mennonite Church of Paso Robles," not dated. pages not numbered.

¹⁰⁷Mrs. Bergman, op. cit. ¹⁰⁸Ibid.

to the east. Because of the traveling distance, the Estrella group met in an adobe church near their area. Rev. Wiebe served the San Marcus Church and Rev. Hege served the Estrella congregation, each with an assistant from his congregation. "Monthly union meetings were conducted in order to keep up the spirit of fellowship between them."¹⁰⁹ (The Estrella congregation is the one which we shall continue to trace in this chapter.)

In 1903, joint meetings were held to discuss problems which had arisen. Some of these were cultural (the differences between South German and north German and Prussian backgrounds)¹¹⁰ and another was the travelling distance, which was a greater factor in the horse-and-buggy days than one thinks of today. As a result of these meetings the San Marcus Church was dissolved. The Estrella group immediately organized themselves as the First Mennonite Church of Paso Robles, with twenty-five charter members.¹¹¹

The First Mennonite congregation continued to meet in the adobe building near Estrella for a while, then in Phillips School, and in a vacated church building in Estrella.¹¹² In 1904, the land company gave the group an abandoned church which it cut into sections and moved into Paso Robles. Because a number of families still lived in Estrella, services were held on alternate Sundays in the two locations.

¹⁰⁹Burkholder, p. 38.

¹¹⁰Mrs. Bergman, op. cit.

¹¹¹Burkholder, p. 39.

¹¹²Gus Toevs, op. cit.

transition from German to English took place. A Young People's Society was also organized during his ministry. Others to pastor the First Mennonite Church have been Orlo Kaufman, 1944-1947; Ben Rahn, 1948-1949; J. M. Galle, 1950-1957; Alfred Schwartz, 1957-1961; Robert D. Suderman, 1961-1964; Milton Ewert, 1965-1969; and Herbert Dalke, 1969 - .

During Rev. Kauman's ministry the constitution was translated into English and revised. In 1948, several improvements were added to the parsonage, including a double garage. On March 13, 1949, an addition to the church was dedicated. It was to be used for Sunday School, but opened to the sanctuary with a folding wall so that it could double the capacity when more seating was needed. A new church was dedicated on Easter Sunday, April 14, 1963.

The church has several women's and girl's societies, Mennonite Men's group, youth groups, Sunday Schools and choir. It also has a branch of Mennonite Disaster Service, which has been used at Avila Beach and during the floods at Paso Robles.

The church has experienced slow, but steady growth. Following the fire which destroyed the Second Mennonite Church (Willow Creek) in January, 1966, that congregation merged with First Church, giving a substantial boost to the size of the congregation. The membership in 1972 was one hundred and ninety-five. The future appears good for the Mennonites in Paso Robles.

First Mennonite Church, Upland

As is the case with most Mennonite churches, the First church at Upland was the result of migration and settlement of Mennonites. The Henry Rees family was one of the first Mennonite families to settle in Southern California.¹¹⁷ They first settled in Pamona and then moved to San Dimas. They lived there for many years, ranching and taking part in civic affairs.¹¹⁸ The very fact that here was a Mennonite family was partially responsible for other Mennonites moving into the area. Also, Mr. Rees wrote glowing articles for the Bundsbote and The Mennonite, "extolling the climate and the opportunities in California."¹¹⁹ It seems that a number of settlers also moved to the sunny clime for their health. Another influential family was the Gerhard P. Ledig family (P.P. as he was called). And in 1895, more Ledig families came west from Summerfield, Illinois. They first settled in North Ontario (now Upland) and then moved to Ioamosa (now Alta Loma). Here they pioneered in citrus farming. The first years were difficult, but with typical Mennonite hard work and careful management they were able to carry on, and some eventually became quite wealthy.¹²⁰ Though these settlers were quite a distance apart (in horse-

¹¹⁷Burkholder, p. 44

¹¹⁸Ella Schmidt, History of the First Mennonite Church, Upland, California (North Newton: The Mennonite Press, 1963), p. 1.

¹¹⁹Ibid., p. 2. ¹²⁰Ibid., p. 2.

and-buggy days) they nevertheless did not forget the church, its principles and fellowship together. They met in the homes of the various members. Jacob Voth, a minister who had settled with some other Mennonite families in Pasadena, came once a month to preach and minister to the spiritual needs of the group.¹²¹ Since travel was difficult by horse-and-buggy and it was a long trip to San Dimas, families often stayed over night -- on the floors and in the barns. At times the whole group went by train to Pasadena to worship and fellowship with the brethren there, contributing to the cost of dinner.

"The year 1902 marks another noteworthy epoch in the movement toward a permanent church organization."¹²² In this year three new families moved into the area, families who were to have a great deal to do with the organization and leadership of the church. They were the Ed. H. Haury family, coming from Oklahoma, where they had been working with the Indians; the Heinrich Schmutz family, also from Oklahoma; and the Michael Horsch family. The Haurys and the Schmutzs settled on the Harms family rancho in one building, one family occupying each end of the building. This was near Cucamonga. The Horsch family bought twenty acres at Ioamosa and the in 1904, moved to Cucamonga. As soon as these families arrived, a Sunday School was organized holding its first classes on December 7, 1902, in the Harm's

¹²¹Ibid., p. 3. ¹²²Ibid., p. 4.

home. One month later, on January 4, 1903, in the Heinrich Schmutz home, "The First Southern California Mennonite Church at Cucamonga, California" was organized with eighteen charter members. The first pastor of this group was Rev. Michael M. Horsche.¹²³

"The Rev. Horsch had a dynamic, friendly personality. He was an organizer and inspired others to work."¹²⁴ It is no wonder that under his ministry, which in two segments covered twenty years, the church saw rapid growth. The first segment of his ministry lasted until 1914, at which time he became field secretary for the General Conference. The second segment was from 1917 to 1927, after which he returned to Europe. During his first years as minister, in 1906, the congregation's first building was erected. Prior to that the congregation had met in the Sourwine building, a crude and rough building which also housed hay and cheap rooms, as well as other boistroous activities. During the second term as minister, the present building was erected in 1925.¹²⁵

In 1904, the congregation joined the Pacific District Conference. In that year too, it was decided that a German school was very important for the children and such was begun. In January of 1906, the name of the church was changed to "The First Mennonite Church, Upland, California."

¹²³Ibid., p. 10. ¹²⁴Ibid., p. 11.

¹²⁵Burkholder, p. 45.

During the first term of Rev. Horsch, the membership grew from eighteen to one hundred and eighty-eight. Growth was also evident in new Sunday School classes and the addition of other activities, such as Christian Endeavor Societies for juniors, youth and adults. The congregation was also very missions-minded and a high percentage of the church contributions was given to missions. This missions emphasis saw the early formation of the Women's Missionary Society (1903) and the Serving Others Circle (1910). The church was also very active in a General Conference and Pacific District Conference-sponsored project in the area, the Mennonite Sanitarium for persons with tuberculosis. It was located in Alta Loma, and was operated by Mennonites from 1913 to 1926, when it was sold due to financial problems and the difficulty in finding help.¹²⁶

Others who have pastored the church are Anthony S. Shelly, 1915-1918; Lester Hostetler, 1927-1929 and 1933-1941; Andrew J. Neuenschwander, 1929-1933; Earl Salzman, 1941-1951; Reynold Weinbrenner (interim), 1951-1952; Paul Goering, 1953-1960; Lester Hostetler (interim) 1961; LaVern Rutschman (interim), 1961; Jesse N. Smucher (interim), Nov. 1961-July, 1962; David Habegger, 1962-1967; James Waltner, 1967-1972.¹²⁷ Rev. Graber was installed in February, 1973.

During the latter years of Rev. Horsch's first term, English began to be introduced into the services, but "German" for

¹²⁶Schmidt, pp. 17-18. ¹²⁷Ibid., p. xi.

the morning service was ... discontinued only when the Rev. H. Horsch left Upland."¹²⁸ The German language was not at all popular during the years of the first World War, and this was one "encouragement" to adopt the English language for worship and other church functions in the early years. In 1919, it was declared that the minutes of the different meetings must be written in English. Then, in 1922, the decision was made to translate the constitution into English. While today this is viewed as progress, this was a grave decision to a group of people whose very life, culture, and even faith seemed to depend on the use of the German language. The last German Sunday School class at Upland was discontinued in 1955, when its teacher moved to Reedley.¹²⁹

! The second term of the Rev. Hostetler is referred to in history of the church as "the musical years." It was during this time that he and Walter H. Hohmann collaborated to edit the Mennonite Hymnary. Of course the church purchased some of these hymnaries (150). It was during this time, also, that the pipe organ was designed and built for the church as a gift. This involved some alterations to the building. Also during this time, the decision was made to purchase a piano, rather than rent one each year at Christmas time. A reed organ was also purchased for the fellowship hall, where it remains today. There were also a

¹²⁸Ibid. p. 21 ¹²⁹Ibid.

First Mennonite Church, Reedley

Mennonite people began moving into the Reedley area in 1903, after Daniel T. Eymann, his son and their families and a few other families from Kansas and Minnesota settled there. Eymann had been sent there by the Santa Fe Immigration Department to investigate the potential of the area for settlement. The group held periodic services in the home of Herman Eymann when a minister was available. Rev. Aeschlimann of Colfax, Washington, conducted services in the Eymann home only a few months after the settlement began. Then, in 1904, the group began meeting in the Washington Grammar school and organized a Sunday School with J. M. Suderman as the first president.¹³³

In June, 1906, the Mennonite families of Reedley decided to organize themselves into a congregation. A five-member committee was appointed to draw up the constitution. A month later the constitution was accepted and the congregation officially organized.¹³⁴ Then, in 1907, six lots were purchased on which to build a house of worship. The decision to build came in March of 1908, and work began in April of that year at the corner of Twelfth and "L" streets. The building was completed and dedicated Sunday, August 2, 1908.¹³⁵

¹³³Burkholder, p. 46

¹³⁴"A Brief History of the First Mennonite Church of Reedley, California, 1906-1956," contained in the church's fiftieth anniversary program, 1956. p. 2.

¹³⁵Ibid., p. 3

Though there were only twenty-five charter members, the congregation grew steadily, and by 1914 there was new construction. A new addition was added to the east to serve as the sanctuary, seating three hundred and fifty persons. The older part was remodeled for use as Sunday School rooms. A basement was also provided. The growth of this church can almost be followed by the building programs which have been carried out. In 1949, there was again need for more sanctuary and fellowship space, so the east walls and the basement were expanded and considerable remodeling was done. The seating capacity following this change was six hundred. In 1956, an expansion fund was started for the new education building which was finished in 1968.¹³⁶ Following close on the heels was a new fellowship hall, completed in 1969.¹³⁷ It appears that the greatest membership was six hundred and twenty-seven, in 1950. During the next ten years there was a drop of some thirty members from the Fresno area as they formed a church in Fresno. The current membership is five hundred and forty-one, making it the largest church in the Pacific District Conference.¹³⁸

"During the first few years of its existence, the Reedley congregation had no full time minister."¹³⁹ Rev.

¹³⁶Ibid.

¹³⁷Rev. Leo Miller in response to author's questionnaire.

¹³⁸

¹³⁹"History," op. cit., p. 4.

Aeschliman, the traveling minister of the Pacific District visited the congregation as often as possible. They were also served by Rev. H. J. Krehbiel in the winter of 1907-1908, and Reverends J. M. Suderman and Otto Lichti ministered to the spiritual needs of the congregation. In the fall of 1909, Rev. H.J. Krehbiel accepted the call to become the first full time pastor. He served in this position for the following nineteen years. When he resigned due to ill health in 1929, the congregation made him Pastor Emeritus, in which capacity he served until 1940. Other pastors who have served the First Mennonite Church are Rev. D. B. Hess, 1925 (interim); Rev. J. M. Regier, 1929-1935; Dr. J. H. Langenwalter, 1936-1943; Rev. P. K. Regier, 1943-1950; Rev. H. G. Weins, 1950-1951 (interim) and 1951-1952;¹⁴⁰ Rev. Aaron Epp, 1952-1961; Rev. Roland Goering, 1961-1968; and Rev. Leo Miller, the present pastor. During the ministry of Dr. Langenwalter some innovations were begun at First Church. There was hired a Director of Religious Education and the first of a series of summer intern pastors. This intern program is still maintained by the church, proving a real blessing to the church as well as needed relief for the pastor during the summer months.¹⁴¹

The church has been missions-minded through its years. The Fiftieth Anniversary Program lists sixteen from the congregation who had gone into full time service as ministers

¹⁴⁰Ibid. ¹⁴¹Ibid., p. 5.

of the gospel or missionaries. (1956) Others have gone out since this time. Also a large number of the congregation have participated in voluntary service programs since they were begun. Auxiliaries dealing with missions are the Ladies Missionary Society, Worthwhile Circle, and Mission Mells. Other auxiliaries are the Men's Brotherhood and Youth Fellowship. The church has also a choir and other musical groups, as music plays a great part in their worship. Another musical feature of the church is the Wicks Pipe Organ, installed in the early forties and enlarged in 1956.¹⁴²

Concerning human relations in the church, the pastor says,

The congregation at Reedley is a variegated melting pot comprised of the descendants of the "early settlers" and succeeding "pioneers" from various communities of Mennonites from "the East" with various thought and cultural patterns. In addition there is a wide divergence of theological thought among the members. This ...diversity naturally creates some tension and problems. Occasionally there are incidents that cause a "flare-up." Usually the matter is eased by way of a discussion meeting. Sometimes a family or two leaves the church.¹⁴³

The method of calling the congregation together to settle disputes appears to follow the Mennonite belief of staying as close to the scriptural examples as possible.

Growth of the First Mennonite Church of Reedley has been primarily due to influx of new Mennonite people and birth rate. The pastor says,

¹⁴²Ibid., p. 4 ¹⁴³Rev. Miller, op. cit.

Although the city is heavily "churched" there are many "unchurched" residents. First Mennonite has not made much of a conscious effort to reach out and bring people to Christ and the church. Occasionally a person or family from the community of non-Mennonite background joins the church.¹⁴⁴

Since the Mennonite influx has virtually stopped during the last ten years, the future of the church will rest upon its outreach.

Immanuel Mennonite Church, Downey

The history of Immanuel Church dates back to the spring of 1908. At that time two men planted the seed at the session of Pacific District Conference for the need of the gospel in the city, where many people are now living and often without a care for the church. Because the District felt it could not financially assume the project, it was taken to the General Conference. Thus, in 1909, Rev. E. F. Grubb arrived in Los Angeles to see a place for a mission work. Late that year a location was settled upon -- a store building at 1432 San Fernando Street (now North Spring Street). The first meeting was held here in May, 1910.¹⁴⁵ The mission was named "River Station Mission."¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴Ibid.

¹⁴⁵E. F. Grubb, "Sketch and History of the Mennonite City Mission of Los Angeles, California," Mennonite Yearbook and Almanac (Quakertown: Eastern Mennonite Conference, 1914) p. 23.

¹⁴⁶Rev. H. B. Dirks "History," from Twenty-fifth Anniversary Program, 1949, p. 3.

A Sunday School was started and regular Sunday services held with an evangelistic message in the evening. During the week Bible classes, children's meetings, Mother's meetings and sewing classes were conducted, in which Christ¹⁴⁷ and His salvation were presented to needy souls.

Because of industrial expansion in the area, the group soon decided to seek another location for the mission. Accordingly they purchased a house and lot at the corner of South Avenue 19 and Albion Street and there erected a small chapel. The name was changed to the "Whosoever Will Mission." This was in 1912.¹⁴⁸ The strictly mission character of the group began to change.

On February 21, 1915, a meeting was held in which steps were taken to more fully organize the congregation into a church; thereafter the mission was known as the Whosoever Will Mennonite Church. There were twelve members at that time.

The next year the Home Mission Board decided that "Church extension seemed more appropriate to the General Conference situation than the so-called rescue mission." It was, therefore, resolved: "That General Conference Missions shall henceforth concentrate their efforts toward reaching the unconverted and unchurched in their respective districts, but at the same time direct definite efforts toward finding and gathering any members of the Mennonite denomination, and to organize them into a church as soon as possible."¹⁴⁹

Catering, now, to the Mennonites in Los Angeles meant that German would have to be the language used, and so after eight years of diligent and successful labors in the field, Rev. Grubb resigned and Rev. M. M. Horsch took

¹⁴⁷Ibid.

¹⁴⁸Ibid.

¹⁴⁹Ibid.

over. On May 12, 1918, a constitution was adopted, officers were elected, and thirty-four members signed the roll of the "Mennonite Mission Church of Los Angeles."¹⁵⁰

By 1924, more Mennonites had come to Los Angeles, and the Sunday School attendance was at one hundred and seven. The church seemed to be prospering, but due to "adverse population changes" the conference bought property at 79th and Standard Avenue, upon which were erected a church and a home for the workers. Here the congregation again experienced steady growth and the good will of the neighborhood. And in 1930, the congregation took the step of faith and became fully self-supporting, having been fully conference-supported until that time.¹⁵¹ It was at this location that the church became known as the Immanuel Mennonite Church.

The congregation decided, in 1951, to move yet a third time and purchased property in the city of Downey. In 1952 the first facilities were dedicated. The building served as fellowship hall with Sunday School rooms. Worship was held there until the new sanctuary was dedicated in 1955.¹⁵² The parsonage was also dedicated that year.

However, all was not well in this new church in the suburbs. By 1956 the disagreements and dissention arose to a fever which led to the pastor and thirty-seven members withdrawing from the church. It was this group which began

¹⁵⁰Ibid. p. 6. ¹⁵¹Ibid.

¹⁵²"Our Church History" an article in the Golden Anniversary booklet, pages not numbered.

the Bethel Community Church in Santa Fe Springs, the neighboring community.¹⁵³ Relations between the two churches today are good, though of course there are still some hurts.

Pastors over the years have been Rev. Grubb, 1909-1917; Rev. M. M. Horsch, 1917-1918; Rev. P. W. Penner, 1918-1921; Rev. D. B. Hess, 1921 (August through November); Deacon D. G. Dyck, November 1921 - July, 1922; Rev. H. A. Classen, 1922-1932; Rev. H. B. Dirks, 1932-1933 (interim); Rev. D. D. Eitzen, 1933-1937; Rev. Albert Janzen (interim); Rev. W. A. Regier, 1938-1949; Rev. Alfred Regier, 1949-1951; Mr. Don Aeschliman (interim); Dr. John Graber, 1952-1956; Rev. Albert Epp, 1956-1969; Dr. Douglas Friederichsen (interim); Rev. Robert Gerhart, 1970 - .¹⁵⁴

The church has the usual auxiliaries for women, men, youth and children, including choirs. They also maintain programs for the children of the community, including athletics for the boys. There has also been a continuing interest in missions work among the people of Immanuel church: a partial listing of ministers and missionaries from the congregation shows twenty-two persons.

In the past, the Sunday School has far exceeded the worship services in attendance. This is no longer true, as the children of the community are growing up and leaving

¹⁵³Ibid.

¹⁵⁴Rev. Robert Gerhart in response to author's questionnaire.

the community, which is becoming increasingly affluent. The effort must now be to reach the adults of the community. In this respect the future goals, etc., of Immanuel are being carefully examined. The pastor has this to say about the future of Immanuel:

I see the long range needs as being a continuing shift toward becoming a truly community church with a strong appeal to adults while not neglecting the total family. We will need to work at providing a church home for those without a Mennonite or German/Northern European background. There has been much progress in the past decade in this area with over half of the family surnames...being "non-Mennonite." I trust this can be done without losing the Anabaptist biblical distinctives while moving from the cultural/ethnic characteristics often thought of as "Mennonite."¹⁵⁵

The present membership of Immanuel is two hundred and forty-five.¹⁵⁶

Mennonite Community Church, Fresno

This church had its beginning on a picnic. A small group of Mennonites living in Fresno wanted to meet occasionally for social gatherings and had their first picnic on October 28, 1952. "It was not too long that the group, many of whom were members of the First Mennonite Church of Reedley, decided to organize as the Fresno Mennonite Fellowship."¹⁵⁷

In a March meeting in 1943, in the P.B.I. Building,

¹⁵⁵Ibid.

¹⁵⁶Minutes of Pacific District Conference Session, 1972, p. 8.

¹⁵⁷Orlando Schmidt, "A Brief History of The Mennonite Community Church, Fresno, California," p. 1. Except where noted, the information for the Fresno Church was obtained from this paper by Mr. Schmidt.

a business committee was elected. The group was advised by Rev. Aaron Epp, then pastor of the church in Reedley. He helped organize the fellowship. For occasional Sunday morning meetings a hall was rented in the downtown area. The vacant church on the corner of Fischer and Olive was rented to provide more worshipful surroundings than the hall.

In May, 1953, the group called its first pastor. Rev. Daniel F. Schellenberg of Reedley began serving the Fellowship at that time. During the year he was there, the membership grew from twenty-eight to thirty-nine. Also during his ministry, the fellowship began looking for a site upon which to build a church building of its own. Such a site was found at the corner of Willow and Olive -- a three acre lot which was purchased for \$1,850.00 per acre. Such indebtedness on the part of so small a group involved very real sacrificing. The Reedley congregation gave some financial help also.

In July, 1954, Rev. Peter J. Ediger arrived in Fresno to begin his first full-time pastorate. During his ministry, a constitution was formulated and adopted (October 1954). The name of the fellowship became the Mennonite Community Church, and on November 21, 1954, was officially organized with forty-one charter members.

The ground breaking ceremony for the new building was held on August 7, 1955. The church continued to meet in the rented building until April 22, 1956, when the present church building was dedicated. As is typical with

Mennonites, much of the construction of the church was done by the members who generously volunteered their labor.

The next step was the securing of a parsonage. In 1959, a loan was secured and construction began on a house which was dedicated on February 28, 1960. It, too, was built almost exclusively with volunteer help. Reverend Ediger and his family were its first occupants.

In July, 1961, Reverend Ediger resigned to take a position with the General Conference, working with the city churches. Rev. Laverne Loewens was called for a year, after which he went to a Mennonite Brethren church in Marion, Kansas. In September, 1962, Rev. Ronald Ropp began service in Fresno, having just graduated from Mennonite Biblical Seminary. In 1968, he decided to further his education and so resigned to attend Claremont College. Following Reverend Ropp, Rev. George Stoneback accepted the call and moved to Fresno from Pennsylvania.

The church was receiving help from the Pacific District Conference for some time, but in the 1960's became self-sufficient. The loans on the property and church building are paid and the one on the parsonage nearly paid. Progress is being made in reaching out to the neighborhood and meeting needs of these people. One of the Sunday School classes conducts weekly services (Sundays) in a nearby "care home," and some of the members and members of the College Community Mennonite Brethren Church are involved in Concerns Enterprises, Inc., a non-profit low-cost housing project.

There are also other plans in the making to reach people where they are.¹⁵⁸

After a high of one hundred and fifty-seven in 1969, the membership is now one hundred and fifty-one.¹⁵⁹ The future of the Mennonite Community Church of Fresno is encouraging.

Bethel Community Church, Santa Fe Springs

Bethel Community Church is a relatively new member in the Pacific District Conference, having been organized in 1956, after a division in the Immanuel Mennonite Church in nearby Downey. It became a member of the Pacific District Conference in 1957. The work was begun with thirty-seven members. Rev. Lyman Hofstetter came about a year later.¹⁶⁰ At first the group met in a home, then in a Y.M.C.A.. Later, during Rev. Hofstetter's ministry, a house and lot were purchased for the church building. The sanctuary was built in 1957 and an education unit added in 1965.

Active auxiliaries are the Youth Fellowship and the Women's Missionary Fellowship. Though there is interest in missions, so far there have been no people from the congre-

¹⁵⁸Rev. G. S. Stoneback in response to author's questionnaire.

¹⁵⁹Minutes of the Pacific District Conference Session, 1972, p.18

¹⁶⁰Rev. Edward Wiebe in response to author's questionnaire. Information for this section gathered from Rev. Wiebe's response and that of Katherine Eyman and Marvin Adams.

gation while he was attending Biola College.

Being a city church, Bethel faces some typical problems. At times active members must move because of employment and that leaves empty spaces which are not so easily filled. There has been some difficulty in drawing the parents of the Sunday Schoolers into the services, a problem especially when so many in the area are Mexican-American with a Roman Catholic background. Since many of the members do not live in the immediate community, it is difficult to get community interest and participation, and since many who started the work are aging, there is need for young families to become active in the work of the church.

The little church has grown slowly, somewhat irregularly during its sixteen year existence. The peak membership was seventy-eight in 1966 and the present attendance is sixty-nine.

Orange Mennonite Fellowship, Orange

The most recent involvement of the Pacific District Conference is a joint work with the Western Conference of the (Old) Mennonite Church in Orange, California. The work here was begun in 1969 by Rev. and Mrs. John T. Kreider. The work was begun in the Kreider home and continues there at present. The group is growing as more and more are led to see how much God loves them and how Christian people can love and care for one another, both young and old.¹⁶¹

¹⁶¹John Kreider, in response to author's questionnaire.

In his report to the Home Missions Committee and the Pacific District Conference in 1972, Rev. Kreider said:

I want to report that the experiment is working and relationships have been built and more importantly people are coming to know Jesus as their friend and Saviour.¹⁶²

It is also interesting that this work was begun entirely for people other than Mennonites, the second work of this kind in the Conference. (The first was at Sweet Home, Oregon). Though there is little history to write at this time, there is much excitement to report. We shall quote extensively from brother Kreider's 1972 report in the remainder of this brief history.

...those who are worshipping and studying the Word with us are not only coming to identify with Jesus but are also happy to be identified with the Mennonite Fellowship of believers. Just two weeks ago twenty persons gathered together in our family room for worship and Bible study. There are seven families actively represented in the Fellowship with other families interested.

The great fact is, the persons in the Fellowship are spreading the word. This is New Testament evangelism taking place in our modern society. They are sharing their faith with their neighbors, but one family drove as far as Phoenix, Arizona, to share their faith with the Christians at First Mennonite and Trinity congregations...

Even though we do not put great stress on giving the people are giving of their own free will...

One person has asked for baptism. I am confident that others will follow very soon...¹⁶³

¹⁶²Minutes of the Pacific District Conference Session 1972, p. 28.

¹⁶³Ibid.

The Fellowship officially organized as a church on November 12th, of 1972. This writer, along with brother Kreider, is very enthusiastic about the future of this work in a rapidly growing part of the great megapolis known as Los Angeles.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY

Since its humble beginning with three member churches in 1896, the Pacific District Conference has grown to include twenty-one churches. During those seventy-five years of growth, several churches were started and died out. Some have continued the whole time. It is for the member churches and the people which constitute them that the conference exists. It is not a law-giving body; rather it is an advisory body. It helps to bind together Mennonites in the states of Oregon, Washington, California, Idaho and Arizona. The total membership of the twenty-one churches is, in 1972, a little over thirty-four hundred.

Although there has been growth in the past seventy-five years, this has really been very small, and for several years has remained nearly null. A static situation exists. There have been, since the early 1900's between fifteen and twenty churches in the conference at all times. The total membership has also been as great for many years as it is today. One has to ask why this is true. Why has not the conference grown significantly? Will it grow in the future?

Throughout its history, the conference has had many churches about which it was said, "_____ is a very missions-minded church." One is taught that a church with

an emphasis on missions will be a growing church; a healthy church full of the life of Christ. This has not always been the case with those churches affiliated with the Pacific District Conference. Why? In all probability, the reason for this has been that the people have felt that they have discharged their Christian obligation by financially supporting a foreign missionary. Other aspects included in the mission of the church have been neglected; the primary ones being intercessory prayer and witness of Christ in the community -- first to Jerusalem and Judea. Missions are local as well as world wide. If Christ is not shared in the community, his body, the church, will not grow. The Mennonites of the Pacific District have often been clannish. They have started churches for Mennonites in areas settled by Mennonites. They have failed to include the remainder of their communities.

When Mennonites migrated, they went in groups and established communities. They wanted to preserve their Mennonite distinctives and the use of the German language (in earlier years.) They seldom mixed socially with others in the communities, except to do business. If the group prospered economically and agreed on customs and theology, the church thrived. If not, the church joined the ranks of the extinct. Thus many of the extinct churches became that way when the economy of an area declined and the Mennonite people moved away. They had not reached out into the community; they left no continuing work among those who

remained.

Another area in which the Mennonites of the Pacific District Conference seemed to have fallen short in relation to their witness to the community was in their frequent inability to live peaceably together. When personal, cultural, or theological differences arose, the most common solution (if it may be called a solution) was for one faction to break fellowship with the original church and form one of its own. For a group of people who has "peace" as one of its major distinctives, this behavior is paradoxical. It is not only a paradox, but it is unscriptural, unless, of course, there can be no reconciliation. Throughout this history, it has been seen that several churches in the P. D. C. were begun on this basis. Some of them failed; some of the more recent ones are still functioning.

The churches in the conference which have made the greatest progress and show the greatest promise for the future are those started for non-Mennonites in non-Mennonite communities. The church members who have the most optimistic outlook for their own churches belong to churches that have caught the vision to share Christ with the "unchurched" in their own communities. When Christians see the fruit of their labors, the spark becomes a flame which can not be quenched. Only as the churches (i.e. the people of each church) of the conference lay hold of the command to evangelize, will they look toward a bright future. Only as this happens will they grow, and thus the Pacific District

Conference will grow also. If they continue to minister only to those of a Mennonite heritage in their areas, the slow death which has already begun in some will continue to its end.

Just as Jeremiah found it difficult to prophesy against a people whom he loved, it is not easy to make this unhappy prognostication. Yet, it must be made. If Christ is not glorified by His own, who then will give him glory. We are told that even the stones will cry out. The Mennonites of the Pacific District will either carry their share of this burden for souls or become lost in the confusion that is evident in the organizational church today.

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Rev. Harry Howard, November 26, 1972; Mrs. Stan Anderson.

APPENDIX

11020 Kent-Kangley Rd., #E-38
Kent, Washington 98031
September 5, 1972

Dear Pastor,

With the 75th anniversary of PDC approaching in 1974, it has been deemed important to write and update the history of the conference for that occasion. I have elected to do this to complete my thesis requirement at seminary, having been ordained into the conference in July with only this requirement remaining in my formal education.

This questionnaire is to obtain information concerning the history of your church to be included with the histories of the other PDC churches in the context of the history of the conference. Please have someone in your congregation who is acquainted with its history complete this brief questionnaire as soon as possible.

Please supply the following information in either composition form or in series as the questions have been asked.

1. What is the name and location of your church?
2. In what year was the church started? (Affiliated with P.D.C.?)
3. Where was the church first started? (Home, school, etc.?)
4. What was the date of the first church building.
5. What were the dates of any additions to this building and/or rebuilding?
6. What were the names of the ministers and/or persons who started the work?
7. What have been the growth patterns of your church?
8. What auxiliary organizations has the church had?
9. What ministers and missionaries have gone forth from your church?
10. What critical problem situations has your church experienced throughout its history? How did the church solve these problems?
11. What is the prognosis concerning the future growth of the church in the community where it now is located?
12. Does the church have a written historical record? If so, would it be made available?

13. What is the name of the person(s) filling out the questionnaire?

It would also be appreciated if you would include two or three good pictures of your facilities. It may not be possible to answer all of the above questions, but any information will be helpful. We hope that this questionnaire can be returned within the next four (4) weeks because it will take several months to put it into thesis form. Your help is certainly appreciated as you are the only ones who can furnish this much needed information.

Sincerely,

Lee Campbell

RESTATED
ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
AND
AMENDED BY-LAWS

PACIFIC DISTRICT CONFERENCE
OF THE
GENERAL CONFERENCE MENNONITE CHURCH

ADOPTED ON JUNE 15, 1968

AT LIND, WASHINGTON

INDEX FOR RESTATED ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

ARTICLE	I - Name	Page 1
	II - Registered Agent	1
	III - Duration	1
	IV - Purpose	1
	V - Members	2
	VI - Board of Directors	2
	VII - Non-Profit	2

INDEX FOR AMENDED BY-LAWS

ARTICLE	I - Name	Page 4
	II - Purpose	4
	III - Confession of Faith	4
	IV - Membership and Representation	5
	V - Relation of Conference to Congregations	6
	VI - Conference Meetings	6
	VII - Auxiliary Organizations	7
	VIII - Relationship With State Fellowships	7
	IX - Officers and Qualifications	7
	X - Duties of Officers	8
	XI - Executive Committee	9
	XII - Standing Committees - Qualifications	10
	XIII - Business Administration Committee	10
	XIV - Home Missions Committee	11
	XV - Education Committee	12
	XVI - Christian Service Committee	12
	XVII - Program Committee	13
	XVIII - Special Representatives	13
	XIX - Recognition of Ministers	14
	XX - Remuneration	14
	XXI - Amendments or Additions	14

RESTATED ARTICLES - NOT FOR GAIN

RESTATED ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION OF
PACIFIC DISTRICT CONFERENCE OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE
MENNONITE CHURCH

WHEREAS at a special meeting of the members of the above named corporation, duly and regularly called and held, pursuant to notice duly given, at 7:30 o'clock P.M., the 15th day of June, 1968, at the Lind High School in the city of Lind, Washington at which there was a quorum present, and that such amendment received at least two-thirds of the votes which voting delegates present at such meeting or represented by proxy were entitled to cast, or alternatively that such amendment was adopted by a consent in writing signed by all delegates entitled to vote with respect thereto.

NOW THEREFORE, WE, the President and Secretary of Pacific District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church, a corporation, being duly authorized by the members of the Conference aforesaid, do hereby certify and verify and acknowledge Amended Articles of Incorporation, to read as follows, superseding the therefore existing Articles of Incorporation and amendments thereto:

ARTICLE I - NAME

- (1) The name of this corporation is "PACIFIC DISTRICT CONFERENCE OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE MENNONITE CHURCH."

ARTICLE II - REGISTERED AGENT

- (1) The registered agent is Ezra H. Widmer whose address is 1613 Springhill Road, Albany, Oregon 97321

ARTICLE III - DURATION

- (1) The period of duration of this organization shall be perpetual.

ARTICLE IV - PURPOSE

- (1) The purposes for which the corporation is organized are as follows:

- (a) To support public worship by the promotion and maintenance of home missions, religious schools, seminaries and other church institutes and to support any benevolent, charitable or missionary undertaking of this organization or of The General Conference of the Mennonite Church.

- (b) To solicit, receive and accumulate under state and federal laws, funds for the support and maintenance of such institutes and any other benevolent, educational or religious purposes.

- (c) To purchase, take, receive, take by gifts, devise and bequests, or otherwise acquire, own, hold, improve, use and otherwise deal in and with real or personal property, or any interest therein, wherever situated.

- (d) To sell, convey, mortgage, pledge, lease, exchange, transfer and otherwise dispose of all or any part of its property and assets.

- (e) To make contracts, and incur liabilities, borrow money at such rates of interest as the corporation may determine, issue its notes, bonds and other obligations, and secure any of the obligations by mortgage or pledge for all or any part of its property, franchises and income.

(f) To lend money for its corporate purposes, invest and reinvest its funds, and take and hold real and personal property as security for the payment of funds so loaned or invested.

(g) To have and exercise all powers necessary or convenient to affect any of or all the purposes for which the corporation is organized, including those set forth in ORS 61.061.

ARTICLE V - MEMBERS

(1) The members with the manner of their election and their qualifications shall be as set forth in the By-Laws which shall specify the time, place and manner of holding meetings of members.

ARTICLE VI - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

(1) The number of directors of this organization shall be not less than three, with the number of directors to be fixed by the By-Laws, which shall also specify all matters pertaining to meetings and other matters concerning the directors.

ARTICLE VII - NON-PROFIT

(1) This corporation shall never be operated for the primary purpose of carrying on a trade or business for profit. Neither the whole, nor any part or portion, of the assets of net earnings of this corporation shall be used, nor shall this corporation ever be organized, or operated, for purposes that are not exclusively charitable, scientific, literary or educational within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (herein called the "Code"), and any references hereto shall be deemed to mean such provision as now or hereafter existing, amended, supplemented, or superseded, as the case may be.

PROVIDED, FURTHER, that in all events and under all circumstances, and not withstanding merger, consolidation, re-organization, termination, dissolution, or winding up of this corporation, voluntary or involuntary or by operation of law, the following provisions shall apply:

a. This corporation shall not have or exercise any power or authority either expressly, by interpretation or by operation of law, nor shall it directly or indirectly engage in any activity, that would prevent this corporation from qualifying (and continuing to qualify) as a corporation described in section 501 (c) (3) of the Code, contributions to which are deductible for federal income tax purposes.

b. No substantial part of the activities of this corporation shall consist of carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting, to influence legislation; nor shall it in any manner or to any extent participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements), any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office; nor shall it engage in any activities that are unlawful under the laws of the United States of America, or the State of Oregon, or any other jurisdiction where such activities are carried on; nor shall it engage in any transaction defined at the time as "prohibited" under 503 of the Code.

c. No compensation or payment shall ever be paid or made to any member, officer, director, trustee, creator, or organizer of this corporation, or substantial contributor to it, except as a reasonable allowance for actual

Expenditures or services actually made or rendered to or for this corporation; and neither the whole nor any part or portion of the assets or net earnings, current or accumulated, of this corporation shall ever be distributed to or divided among any such persons; provided, further, that neither the whole nor any portion of such assets or net earnings shall ever be used for, accrue to, or inure to the benefit of any member or private individual within the meaning of section 501 (c) (3) of the Code.

d. In the event of termination, dissolution or winding up of this corporation in any manner or for any reason whatsoever, its remaining assets, if any, shall be distributed to (and only to) one or more organizations described in section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

e. The powers and purposes of this corporation shall at all times be so construed and limited as to enable this corporation to qualify as a non-profit corporation organized and existing under Chapter 61 of the Oregon Non-profit Corporation Law.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereunto set our hands and seals this 15th day of June, 1968.

PACIFIC DISTRICT CONFERENCE OF THE
GENERAL CONFERENCE MENNONITE CHURCH,
a corporation

By Wilfred Ulrich
President

Roland R. Goering
Secretary

On June 28, 1968 Elmer D. Widmer also signed this document as one of the Officers signing the Original Articles (in compliance with Oregon Statute). The signatures were notarized by Attorney Leonard F. Janzen of Spokane. The Articles were filed July 3, 1968 in the office of the Corporation Commissioner of the State of Oregon, Frank J. Healy, Corporation Commissioner.

AMENDED BY-LAWS OF THE PACIFIC DISTRICT CONFERENCE

Mindful of the apostolic admonition, "let all things be done decently and in order", we accept the following rules and regulations as the basis of our organization.

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of our organization is "Pacific District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church."

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

The purpose of this Conference is: to mutually foster our Christian life; to be drawn closer together as we serve our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; and to unite ourselves more effectively in our missionary efforts to bring a spiritual ministry to others.

ARTICLE III - CONFESSION OF FAITH

Section 1. The Basis of Faith

a. The Pacific District Conference believes in the divine inspiration and the infallibility of the Bible as the Word of God and the only trustworthy guide of faith and life; and in Jesus Christ as the only Savior and Lord: "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 3:11). A more complete statement of the Conference position is found in the "Statement of Doctrine" adopted by the General Conference Mennonite Church at its twenty-ninth session held in Souderton, Pennsylvania, August 17-22, 1941:

Accepting the full Bible and the Apostolic Creed:

THE TRIUNE GOD

We believe in one God, eternally existing and manifest as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

JESUS CHRIST

We believe in the Deity of Jesus Christ, 'the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth', born of the Virgin Mary, in His perfect humanity, His atoning death, His bodily resurrection from the dead, and His personal triumphant return.

LIFE BEYOND

We believe in the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the dead, and a future state determined by divine judgment.

AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE

We believe in the divine inspiration and the infallibility of the Bible as the Word of God and the only trustworthy guide of faith and life.

TRANSFORMING SALVATION BY GRACE

We believe a Christian is one saved by grace whose life is transformed into the likeness of Christ by His atoning death and the power of His resurrection.

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

We believe that Christ lived and taught the way of life as recorded in the Scriptures which is God's plan for individuals and the race, and that it

becomes disciples of Christ to live in this way, thus manifesting in their personal and social life and relationships, the love and holiness of God. And we believe that this way of life also implies nonresistance to evil by carnal means, the fullest exercise of love, the resolute abandonment of the use of violence, including warfare. We believe further that the Christian life will of necessity express itself in nonconformity to the world in life and conduct.

PRAYER

We believe in prayer as fellowship with God, a desire to be in His will, and in its divine power.

CHURCH OF BELIEVERS

We believe that the Christian Church consists of believers who have repented from their sins, have accepted Christ by faith and are born again, and sincerely endeavor by the grace of God to live the Christian life.

CHRISTIAN BROTHERHOOD

We believe in the brotherhood of the redeemed under the fatherhood of God in Christ.

b. In the matter of faith it is, therefore required of the congregations which unite with the Conference that, accepting the above confession, they hold fast to the doctrines of:

- Salvation by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:8,9; Titus 3:5);
- Baptism on confession of faith (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38);
- Avoidance of oaths (Matt. 5:34-37; James 5:12);
- Biblical doctrine of nonresistance (Matt. 5:39-48; Romans 12:9-21);
- Nonconformity to the world (Romans 12:1,2; Eph. 4:22-24);
- Sanctity and the permanence of the marriage relationship (Mark 10:11,12; Matthew 5:31,32; Eph. 5:21-6:4);
- Practice of a scriptural church discipline (Matt. 18:15-17; Gal. 6:1).

c. At no time shall any rules be made or resolutions adopted which in any way contradict the historical principles of faith as laid down in this confession.

Section 2. The Separated Life

a. The Pacific District Conference believes that membership in oath-bound secret societies, military organizations, or other groups which tend to compromise the loyalty of the Christian to the Lord and to His church is contrary to such apostolic admonitions as, "Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers" (II Cor. 5:14,15) and that the church "Should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:26).

b. Further, regarding "the works of the flesh" (Gal. 5:19-21), the Conference believes "that they who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God". Therefore, every congregation should seriously strive to remain free from these evils, much rather, "If we live by the Spirit, by the Spirit let us also walk". (Gal. 5:25).

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP AND REPRESENTATION

Section 1. Membership

a. This organization shall include all "General Conference Mennonite Churches" in the states of California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Arizona, and such churches, including mission churches, in other states as may wish to affil-

iate with this Conference and not already included in either the Northern or the Western District Conferences.

b. Any congregation which subscribes and adheres to the confession and tenets as set forth above may upon proper application unite with the Pacific District Conference.

c. Application for membership shall be given in writing to the Conference Secretary at least thirty (30) days in advance of any regular session of the Home Missions Committee, which shall report its findings and recommendations to the Executive Committee for their decision to report it to the Conference session.

d. An affirmative two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of delegate votes cast at any regular Conference session is required for grant of membership.

Section 2. Representation at Conference Sessions

a. The right to vote is restricted to duly accredited delegates present in person or by written proxy. Each congregation belonging to the Conference is entitled to one (1) vote for every ten (10) members, or fraction thereof. Any congregation unable to send delegates are authorized by written proxy to appoint delegates from other Conference congregations to represent them. No person shall be allowed to exercise more than ten (10) regular votes plus five (5) proxy votes.

b. Certification of delegates. The Conference Secretary shall receive and record the credentials of delegates, which must be presented in writing. These credentials shall be in the hands of the Conference Secretary before the opening of the first Conference business session. Questions in regard to certification of delegates and assignment of proxy votes shall be referred to and decided by the officers of the Conference.

c. The right to participate. Conference officers, elected standing committees, Conference ministers, and any others holding responsible positions with the General Conference are entitled to participate in deliberations with the accredited delegates upon certification of the Floor Privileges Committee and a majority vote of the Conference. Only accredited delegates shall have the right to vote.

ARTICLE V - RELATION OF CONFERENCE TO CONGREGATIONS

Section 1. The Conference believes firmly in the congregational form of government, with the local church retaining freedom of self-determination. For this reason, the Conference organization is democratic in form and function. It is a deliberative body carrying powers of recommendation but not of legislation. Its policies, plans, and recommendations are generally formulated by its Executive Committee and working committees, and presented to the Conference for endorsement, modification or rejection. Its work is accomplished under the supervision of the Executive Committee and the Business Administration Committee.

ARTICLE VI - CONFERENCE MEETINGS

Section 1. Annual Meeting

a. Time and place of meeting. The annual meeting of the Conference shall be held every year during the months of May, June, July or August as decided by the Executive Committee in co-operation with the host church. Invitations for

entertaining the Conference shall be presented to the Secretary in writing. The Conference shall decide on the acceptance of an invitation and shall also decide the place for the Conference Sessions.

b. The order of business and program is to be promulgated by the Program Committee and the President of the Conference.

Section 2. Council of Committees and Ministers Conference

a. A mid-year meeting of approximately three (3) days duration shall be held in November, December or January, with the exact date and place to be decided by the Executive Committee.

b. The President shall formulate the agenda for the Council of Committee meetings.

c. A Program Committee of two (2) persons, or more, from any one state shall be responsible for the program of the Ministers Conference. This committee is to be appointed by the Executive Committee at the annual Conference.

Section 3. Notice of Meetings

a. Written notice of time and place of any meeting shall be given by the Secretary of the Conference to each member congregation at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting.

ARTICLE VII - AUXILIARY ORGANIZATIONS

Section 1. The Conference Auxiliaries shall be the Women's Missionary Association, Mennonite Men, Young People's Union and any other auxiliary deemed necessary by the members for the spiritual welfare of the Conference.

Section 2. Each auxiliary shall report its newly elected officers to the Conference Secretary before the close of the Annual Conference Session.

Section 3. Each auxiliary shall present a progress and financial report to the Conference Secretary thirty (30) days before the annual Conference Sessions so that it may be published as ordered by the Executive Committee or Conference.

ARTICLE VIII - RELATIONSHIP WITH STATE FELLOWSHIPS

Section 1. While the state fellowships enjoy autonomy both as to organization and program of service, the Conference seeks to remain sensitive to their needs and concerns, and provide channels for close contact with them. The chairman of each state fellowship shall be invited to attend annual and mid-year meetings.

ARTICLE IX - OFFICERS AND QUALIFICATIONS

Section 1. The officers of this Conference shall be a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

Section 2. The President and Vice-President shall be elected by the majority vote by ballot of all votes cast by the delegates, for a term of one (1) year or until his successor shall be elected and qualified. After completion of two (2) consecutive terms an interval of one (1) year must elapse before either officer can be eligible for re-election to the same office. They shall also have resided in and have been a member in the Conference for at least one (1) year.

Section 3. The Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected by the majority vote by ballot of all votes cast by the delegates, for a term of one (1) year or until his successor shall be elected and qualified. After completion of five (5) consecutive terms, an interval of one (1) year must elapse before either officer can be eligible for re-election to the same office. They must also have resided in and have been a member in the Conference for at least one (1) year.

ARTICLE X - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1. When the Conference is not in session, the officers shall represent the Conference. They are also members of the Business Administration Committee.

Section 2. President. The President shall preside over all sessions of the Conference, and he shall open or have the same opened with a Conference sermon. During the sessions, he shall maintain order and insure the discussions are conducted according to the rules generally observed in such organizations, but especially in accordance with a Christian, brotherly spirit.

a. He shall be chairman of the Officers, the Executive Committee and Council of Committees.

b. He shall represent the Conference at the General Conference Council of Boards and at all sessions of the General Conference.

c. He shall appoint temporary committees not designated for appointment by the Executive Committee to perform any specific task in line with the Conference work.

d. He shall sign with the Secretary all legal documents and other instruments required to be signed by the Conference.

e. He shall automatically be a member of the Business Administration Committee and an ex-officio member of all other committees.

f. He shall co-sign orders with the Secretary for disbursement of Conference funds.

Section 3. Vice-President

a. It shall be the duty of the Vice-President to act for the President in case of his absence because of disability, and upon the President's request.

b. He shall automatically be a member of the Business Administration Committee and an ex-officio member of all other committees.

c. He shall be a member of the Executive Committee.

d. He shall perform such additional duties as shall be delegated to him.

Section 4. Secretary

a. The Secretary shall prepare and preserve accurate minutes of all proceedings of the Conference, the Executive Committee and Business Administration Committee.

b. He shall co-sign with the President all the legal documents and other instruments required to be signed by the Conference.

- c. He shall automatically be a member of the Business Administration Committee and the Executive Committee. He shall serve as Secretary of both committees.
- d. He shall sign orders with the President for disbursement of Conference Funds.
- e. He shall maintain statistical records of the Conference and Auxiliary organizations and arrange to publish these with the transactions of Conference Sessions as ordered by the Conference.
- f. Upon termination of his duties as Secretary, he shall turn over to his successor all papers and documents.
- g. He shall perform such additional duties as shall be delegated to him.

Section 5. Treasurer

- a. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to receive all monies or funds of the Conference, and to deposit the same in the name of the Conference, in such banks as the Executive Committee shall designate from time to time, and he shall disburse such funds upon the written orders of President and Secretary.
- b. He shall make payments on loans with interest when due without written orders.
- c. He is automatically a member and treasurer of the Business Administration Committee and Executive Committee.
- d. He shall keep full and accurate books of account, which shall at all times be open to inspection by any member of the Conference and shall make a report in detail of all monies received and all monies paid out, and file the same with the Secretary and present his report at the annual business meeting of the Conference.
- e. Upon termination of his duties as Treasurer, he shall turn over to his successor all papers and documents.
- f. He shall be bonded as required by the Business Administration Committee.
- g. He shall perform such additional duties as shall be delegated to him.

ARTICLE XI - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Chairman of each standing Committee.

Section 2. In matters not pertaining to the work of the Conference committees, churches may turn to the Executive Committee for advice and help, and this committee may refer such matters to one of the standing committees or a special committee appointed by them.

Section 3. The Executive Committee shall (a) fill vacancies in any elective office which may arise between annual Conference Sessions, with a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote needed for such appointment if done by mail: (b) prepare a budget of expenditures to be brought before the annual Conference session; (c) prepare resolutions to be brought before the Conference session; (d) appoint annually the members of the following special committees:

- (1) Auditing Committee, consisting of two (2) members.
- (2) Nominating Committee, with one (1) representative from each state.
- (3) Floor Privileges Committee, consisting of two (2) members.
- (4) Program Committee for Council of Committee and Ministers Mid-Year Conference, with two (2) or more members in each year from any state and with a different state to be represented in successive years.
- (5) Budget Promotion Committee, consisting of two (2) or three (3) representatives.
- (6) Stewardship Committee, consisting of three (3) representatives.

ARTICLE XII STANDING COMMITTEES - QUALIFICATIONS

Section 1. The Standing Committees shall be those of Business Administration, Home Missions, Education, Christian Service, and Program.

Section 2. Not more than one (1) new member in the Conference shall be elected to each Conference committee. A new member is one who is new in the Pacific District and began residence during the Conference year that concludes with the session in question.

Section 3. Each member shall be elected at the annual Conference meeting by a majority vote of all ballots cast and shall serve his specified term, or until his successor shall be elected and qualified.

Section 4. No person shall serve on more than one (1) elected standing committee.

Section 5. By invitation to be extended, each of the above committees shall include in an ex-officio capacity a member from the parallel board or committee of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Section 6. No committee member shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.

ARTICLE XIII - BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Section 1. The Business Administration Committee, also known as the Board of Directors, shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, all of the Pacific District Conference, plus five (5) members elected at large. The elected members at large are to serve five (5) year terms, one member to be elected each year, with not more than two (2) members from one state.

Section 2. The duties of the committee are:

- a. To represent the Conference in legal matters concerning Conference properties.
- b. To receive donations and bequests of real and personal property.
- c. To obtain liability and fire insurance and to determine the need for a surety bond for the Treasurer, at the expense of the Conference.
- d. To establish a Revolving Fund to be used in making loans to newly established or needy congregations engaged in a building program upon written application. The Committee shall have authority to approve any application, but if approval is by mail all committee members must consent thereto. All loans must be represented by notes duly executed by the responsible officers of the congregation to be charged.
- e. To borrow money for the Revolving Fund which may be re-loaned at their discretion.
- f. To prepare a budget for the approval of the Executive Committee for the annual Conference Session.

Section 3. The Conference Secretary shall keep records of all business proceedings of the committee. To assist him an assistant Secretary shall be designated annually by the committee to record the proceedings of the committee.

Section 4. The Conference Treasurer shall keep records of all disbursements and income, keep records of all notes payable and notes receivable and shall make a yearly report to the Conference Secretary 30 days before the annual Confer-

ence Session so that it may be published as ordered by the Executive Committee or Conference.

Section 5.

a. The Chairman, elected annually by the Committee, shall prepare an annual report of the work for each annual Conference Session. This report shall be given to the Conference Secretary at least 30 days before the Conference Session so that it may be published as ordered by the Executive Committee or Conference. An oral report is to be given at the Council of Committees.

b. The Vice-Chairman, or in his absence a chairman pro tempore, elected by the Committee, shall represent the Committee on the Executive Committee if the Chairman is absent.

c. All future planning is subject to approval of Executive Committee and the Conference.

ARTICLE XIV - HOME MISSIONS COMMITTEE

Section 1. The Home Missions Committee shall consist of five (5) members, one member to be elected each year for a term of five (5) years with not more than two (2) members from one (1) state.

Section 2. The duties of the Committee are:

a. To provide spiritual nurture for church members that live in areas with no organized churches and for pastorless churches within the Conference district.

b. To open new fields of labor and appoint the necessary workers for such fields.

c. To tender assistance to settle any disputes and give assistance to problem situations which may exist in the churches.

d. To assist churches in securing speakers for evangelistic services or meetings for special occasions.

e. To determine the amount and type of aid where churches are in need. This Committee in co-operation with the Conference officers shall be responsible only to aid churches or groups financially where their counsel has been sought and their recommendations accepted as pertaining to special speakers, the securing of ministers, or financial assistance of other natures.

f. To function as the Conference ministerial committee, and as such shall examine and recommend applicants for the ministry. They shall act in co-operation with the General Conference Committee on the Ministry, and they shall work within the standards established by the General Conference concerning qualification of ministers as set forth in the General Conference Constitution.

g. To examine churches applying for membership in the Conference.

h. To raise funds for special projects and to employ the Future Projects Reserve Fund to make grants to special mission projects.

i. To prepare a budget for approval of the Executive Committee for the annual Conference Session.

Section 3.

a. The Chairman shall prepare an annual report of the work for each annual Conference Session. This report given to Conference Secretary at least 30 days before the Conference Session so that it may be published as ordered by the Executive Committee or Conference. An oral report is to be given at Council of Committees.

b. All future planning is subject to approval of Executive Committee and the Conference.

c. The newly elected committee member or members and carry over members shall organize before the end of the Annual Conference Session and report to Conference Secretary.

d. The Chairman of this committee is a member of the Executive Committee.

e. The Vice-Chairman, or in his absence a chairman pro tempore, elected by the Committee, shall represent the Committee on the Executive Committee if the Chairman is absent.

ARTICLE XV - EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Section 1. The Education Committee shall consist of four (4) members, one(1) member to be elected each year for a term of four (4) years, with not more than one (1) from a state.

Section 2. The duties of the Committee are:

a. To promote Christian education in church schools and summer Bible schools, and the promotion of special Christian principles, such as Bible Doctrines, Mennonite principles, and such special teachings as the needs may prompt.

b. To provide needed publicity of Conference concerns and activities and to supervise the publishing of the district paper, The Messenger.

c. To co-operate with the General Conference Board of Education and Publication in its program and service.

d. To collect and preserve materials which are of historical value.

e. To prepare a budget for their respective committee for approval of the Executive Committee for the Annual Conference Session.

Section 3.

a. The Chairman shall prepare an annual report of the work for each annual Conference Session. This report must be given to the Conference Secretary at least 30 days before the Conference Session so that it may be published as ordered by the Executive Committee or Conference. An oral report is to be given at Council of Committees.

b. All future planning is subject to approval of Executive Committee and the Conference.

c. The newly elected committee member or members and carry over members shall organize before the end of the Annual Conference Session and report to the Conference Secretary.

d. The Chairman of this committee is a member of the Executive Committee.

e. The Vice-Chairman, or in his absence a chairman pro tempore, elected by the Committee, shall represent the Committee on the Executive Committee if the Chairman is absent.

ARTICLE XVI - CHRISTIAN SERVICE COMMITTEE

Section 1. The Christian Service Committee shall consist of three (3) members, one member to be elected each year for a term of three (3) years, with not more than one (1) from a state.

Section 2. The duties of the Committee are:

a. To co-operate with the General Conference Board of Christian Service in its total program of services including relief, rehabilitation, mutual aid, voluntary service, peace, mental health, and other areas of social concern.

b. To promote such other causes and services expressing a Christian witness as are appropriate or are delegated to the committee.

c. To prepare a budget for their respective committee for approval of the

Executive Committee for the Annual Conference Session.

Section 3.

a. The Chairman shall prepare an annual report of the work for each Annual Conference Session. This report must be given to the Conference Secretary at least 30 days before the Conference Session so that it may be published as ordered by the Executive Committee or Conference. An oral report is to be given at the Council of Committees.

b. All future planning is subject to approval of Executive Committee and the Conference.

c. The newly elected committee member or members and carry over members shall organize before the end of the Annual Conference Session and report to the Conference Secretary.

d. The Chairman of this committee is a member of the Executive Committee.

e. The Vice-Chairman or, in his absence a chairman pro tempore, elected by the Committee, shall represent the Committee on the Executive Committee if the Chairman is absent.

ARTICLE XVII - PROGRAM COMMITTEE

Section 1. The Program Committee shall consist of three (3) members, one member to be elected each year for a term of three (3) years, with not more than one (1) from a state.

Section 2. The duties of this Committee, in consultation with the Executive Committee, are:

a. To arrange and organize the program for the annual Conference Sessions.

b. To provide place in the Conference program for causes vital to the work of the Conference.

c. To assist the Conference President in the orderly procedure of Conference business.

d. To make a report on program plans for Annual Conference Sessions at the Council of Committee meeting for the approval of the Executive Committee.

e. To provide the costs of speakers and other costs to the Executive Committee to be included in the budget for the new conference year.

Section 3.

a. The newly elected committee member or members and carry over members shall organize before the end of the Annual Conference Session and report to the Conference Secretary.

b. The Chairman of this committee is a member of the Executive Committee.

c. The Vice-Chairman or, in his absence a chairman pro tempore, elected by the Committee, shall represent the Committee on the Executive Committee if the Chairman is absent.

ARTICLE XVIII - SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVES

Section 1. The Conference shall have two (2) representatives on the Bethel College Board. Every three (3) years two (2) nominees shall be submitted to the Bethel College Corporation meeting. That Body then votes on the two nominees, and the member that is elected serves as Conference representative on the Bethel College Board for a term of six (6) years.

ARTICLE XIX - RECOGNITION OF MINISTERS

Section 1. The Conference recognizes the importance of Christian convictions and adequate preparation for the spiritual leadership of our churches.

Section 2. Any minister or evangelist representing any of our churches or serving as a spiritual leader therein shall be duly qualified, either by ordination, licensing, or commission, and be properly certified or registered with the General Conference Committee on the Ministry.

Section 3. Every ministerial candidate shall complete a questionnaire furnished by the Home Missions Committee and submit the same to the Committee for its approval before being ordained or licensed.

Section 4. The functions, rights, or privileges of the various ministerial offices are defined as follows:

- a. Licensed Minister. A licensed minister is authorized to preach and provide pastoral services subject to the following restrictions: (1) A license is granted for one (1) year and since it anticipates ordination a license should be renewed not more than five (5) years. (2) A licensed minister may perform marriages when authorized by the Home Missions Committee and when permitted by the law of the state. A licensed minister does not have authority to baptize or serve communion, except by request of the local congregation and the authorization of the Home Missions Committee, if appropriate. A licensed minister does not have authority to ordain or license others.
- b. Ordained Minister. An ordained minister (elder) shall have the right to perform the functions of the licensed minister, and, in addition, administer the sacraments of baptism and communion, and perform ordinations when authorized by the Home Missions Committee.

Section 5. If a minister from another denomination be considered for the pastorate, the local church in co-operation with the Home Missions Committee shall ask him to complete the ordination questionnaire and submit the same to the church he contemplates to serve and to the Home Missions Committee. He shall be interviewed by the Home Missions Committee for purposes of counseling and acquainting him with the tenets of our faith and the various phases of our Christian ministry.

ARTICLE XX - REMUNERATION

Section 1. All committees and all persons temporarily appointed by the Conference shall have their travel and other expenses incurred in the line of duty paid out of the Conference treasury and shall be entitled to remuneration for their time, all as the Executive Committee may specify.

ARTICLE XXI - AMENDMENTS OR ADDITIONS

Section 1. No amendments shall be made to change the plan of voting of one(1) vote for ten (10) members, or fraction thereof, per member congregation or to change this Conference from its non-profit basis.

Section 2. Articles of Incorporation and/or By-Laws may be amended otherwise at any Conference Session by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the voting delegates, provided the proposed amendments have been submitted in writing to member congregations not less than seven (7) days or more than fifty (50) days prior to the Conference Sessions. (In accord with Oregon State Statute).