

*HEMPFIELD
CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN*

*CELEBRATING 25 YEARS
1974-1999*

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

By His Grace, this fellowship proclaims God as loving Father, Jesus Christ as Eternal Savior and the Holy Spirit as Constant Guide. With love and humility, and a focus on family nurture we strive to witness, serve, teach and worship for the glory of God and our neighbors' good.

ROOTS

Hempfield Church of the Brethren is young, yet very old. The present congregation is preceded by The East Petersburg and Salunga congregations. The roots of these two organizations extend back to the first half of the eighteenth century. During these early years, the Brethren gathered for worship in homes. About 1840, Jacob Stehman erected, over his spring, a house intended especially for worship when it came his turn to entertain the fellowship. Stehman lived some distance north of Petersburg and the spring is one of the sources of the Conestoga Creek. Meetings ceased in the Stehman Spring house when the Brethren secured the use of the old log house on the corner of State and Lemon streets in the village of what is now known as East Petersburg.

The architecture of the old log meeting house, or blockhouse as it was called, was pre-Revolutionary and was likely built before the colonies were independent from England. Tradition said when it was built, every settler brought a log towards its erection. Most of the logs were likely brought by Mennonites, but enough of other persuasions gave to the erection of the building until it had a union nature. Mennonites, Lutherans and Brethren held worship in the building. During this period, the Brethren used Jacob Graybill's barn, just west of Petersburg, for their Love Feasts. The Lutherans erected their own place for worship, perhaps in 1847, and withdrew, leaving the Brethren and Mennonites in charge of the building and location. The Mennonites appear to have held property rights to the structure, which was used to house the neighborhood school during the week. The Mennonites transferred all claims and rights to the Brethren on September 29, 1867. Brethren in 1873 replaced the former structure with a brick building 45 X 60 feet at a cost of \$2,674.29. This was the first Love Feast house in the area and was built amidst great controversy and opposition.

Brethren living in the East Petersburg area held their membership in the Mountville Church of the Brethren. At the December council of the Mountville Church, a vote was taken which resulted in the right of the East Petersburg Brethren to organize into a separate congregation. This organization took place on January 26, 1918, with 257 charter members. In 1923, the newly established congregation razed the old brick structure and replaced it with a building at a cost of \$18,000. This building served the growing membership until 1952, when it underwent a complete renovation.

The East Petersburg Brethren held worship services in three locations: East Petersburg, Neffsville, and Salunga. A frame house for worship and the holding of Love Feast had been built in Salunga in 1887 at a cost of \$3,000, and in 1908 a Sunday school organized. When East Petersburg separated from Mountville, Salunga, mostly due to its location, came under the care of the East Petersburg Brethren. In 1948 one hundred forty-seven members, living in and near Salunga desired and were granted the right to organize themselves into an autonomous congregation. These two self-governing congregations continued until 1974 when common goals and purposes reunited them and formed the Hempfield Church of the Brethren.

THE WEDDING

After a quarter of a century of separation, the Salunga and East Petersburg congregations discovered each was facing common problems. For a number of years both groups had been considering upgrading their facilities. The old structures were no longer adequate for modern expanded programs. Parking had become a problem and the location of each was not conducive for growth and expanded building.

In the early spring of 1974, Jacob C. Wine, minister of the East Petersburg congregation, made an approach to Norman L. Bowers, minister of the Salunga congregation regarding the possibility of the two groups reuniting. The discovery was both had been considering the same possibility. After private discussions between the congregational leaders, it was decided to go public with the idea. A special council was called for on July 10, 1974 in both churches. An extensive working paper was presented

to the groups. Persons were to list all the reason for and against the merger. The paper listed the following common needs for each congregation, as well as the things they already had in common.

The needs were:

- ❖ Both groups were seeking a pastor.
- ❖ Each was in need of a more vigorous spiritually oriented program.
- ❖ There was need adequate youth leadership.
- ❖ Each group needed better and expanded facilities.
- ❖ Neither group could hope to accomplish these things financially alone.

Another topic the group discussed was whether the two groups could more adequately fulfill their mission as the “Body of Christ” by uniting? Following this topic were the following questions:

- A. By this move of uniting, what are the things that can be done that each is unable to do presently?
- B. Is there anything that is now being done that could nt be done if the groups merged?
- C. Will there be a loss in membership through merger, and if so, why?
- D. What are some of the strengths of this type of merger?

No decisions were to be made at the first meeting. The meeting was only for discussion. A later date was set when each congregation would call a second council for the purpose of voting on the issue. The date was to be the same evening for both congregations.

Before the agreed upon date, a sermon was preached in each church by the same speaker entitled **“FOR THE GLORY OF GOD AND MY NEIGHBORS’ GOOD”**.

The second council was called, the vote taken, and in each congregation, it was overwhelmingly positive. The union was sealed with a Love Feast on the first Sunday evening of October 1974. It has been a harmonious marriage!

PULLING THE PLOW

By the fall of 1974, the two groups had officially united and were worshipping together in the East Petersburg house. The process of coming together was an orderly one and released a new surge of enthusiasm, energy and spiritual commitment. In short order a pastor was chosen and a decision made to build a new church building nearby equal distance between the two former buildings. A site was selected, a building committee was chosen and an architect and building contractor were employed.

On Sunday, October 5, 1975, preparations having previously been made, the worshipping body met on the new church site. The chosen location was in East Hempfield Township at the corner of Stevens Street and Metzler Road. The congregation was literally hitched to a plow and the ground was broken by the congregation all pulling together to break the ground. This yoking together symbolized the unity and willingness of the group to work together in oneness. Everyone worked together and this harmony has continued until this day, twenty-five years later.

During the following months, many groups labored diligently to create an adequate beautiful building for worship, learning, fellowship and service to others. There was joyful giving and the debt incurred was canceled well before the ten-year due date.

The dedication of the new church building in early 1977 was a very spiritual crescendo to the congregation, the community and our denomination. Rev. Charles Bieber delivered the dedication address on Sunday, January 2, 1977. Dedication services lasted one week and featured th following outstanding religious speakers: Rev. Earl K. Ziegler, Dr. James D. Glass, Dr. A.G. Breidenstine, Dr. Anna B. Mow, Donald Barnhouse and Dr. Loren Bowman. The services concluded with Love Feast and communion. This spiritual fervor continued for more than seven years with the strengthening of

the organizational structure, the Sunday School, music and worship, Vacation Bible School, and outreach programs. Pastor Brumbaugh emphasized to the congregation the idea that more planning was needed to keep our congregation growing and vibrant. As a result, yearly retreats were held at various locations within short driving distances where all officers, commissions, board members, and Sunday School teachers could meet, discuss and formulate plans for the next year. Also, during this time, emphasis was placed on getting more people involved in the activities and work of the church. Boards and commissions were expanded and term limits for most elected offices was established.

In 1982 the congregation achieved its goal of paying off the debt it had assumed to build the new church building. A study was made to define and identify congregational goals for the next decade. This study revealed that the congregation felt the need for a youth pastor and a stewardship goal of committing fifty percent of the money received to outreach programs. The next year Joel Nogle, a Lancaster Seminary student was chosen as youth pastor. The number of youth that have attended the last Church of the Brethren Youth Conference and those planning to attend the next is a testament to our program. We believe and observe that the present leadership in our denomination was inspired and motivated by this experience.

The tenth anniversary of our congregation was observed in October 1984 with two Sundays of celebration under the theme of "Praise to God for the Past – Faith in God for the Future". The first Sunday Rev. Harold Bomberger, District Executive of the Atlantic Northeast was worship leader for the Love Feast. Youth Night was held with an inspirational speaker, Jeffrey Batzer. The second Sunday of the celebration featured the spiritual message of Sister Anna Mow, A Brethren Missionary to India, seminary professor and prolific author of inspirational books. Also featured was the organ recital and inspirational service of Wayne LeFevre, locally renowned organist.

Today, the leadership of 25 years ago, is largely retired from active service. These men and women continue supporting the ongoing program with their presence and their means, rejoicing that younger, responsible person has assumed leadership rolls.

New and younger leadership and cultural changes have altered the church of yesterday. Today for most Sunday School classes there is team teaching and an early and later worship service on Sunday. Congregational worship is often introduced with a band and the singing of modern songs of praise. The entire program is much less formal than it was twenty-five years ago. Today there is emphasis on the formation of small groups for study and prayer.

Hempfield Church of the Brethren still strives to work
FOR THE GLORY OF GOD AND OUR NEIGHBORS' GOOD!

ALVIN BRIGHTBILL CHOIR ROOM

Alvin F. Brightbill was a man of unusual musical ability. His musical talent became a guiding force in the Church of the Brethren for more than a half century as youth camp leader, professor of music at Bethan Theological Seminary, a choir director, lecturer, hymn writer and music composer

His life was deeply spiritual and this quality could be felt in all he undertook, whether it was leading a congregational hymn, teaching music and dramatics, or in private conversation. This spiritual tone is reflected in a prayer written a few hours before his death – “God...I am such a stranger in this drifting space; I see your back but never see your face...I just can't seem to catch up for your intention for me...Please, catch me up into your will, O God...Lord of life, and of life after life. Yours be the Glory – Gloria in Excelsis Deo!”

ALEXANDER MACK CHAPEL

ALEXANDER Mack, Sr. was born into a wealthy family at Schriesheim, Germany, in the year 1679. He received a good liberal education, and became a miller by trade. Through his family and good business ability he became reasonably wealthy. At the age of twenty-one he married Anna Margaretha Klingin. To them was born five children, three sons and two daughters.

Being a man of a deep religious nature, he became a Separatist which brought to him great persecution. The family fled to Schwarzenau, Germany where Mack became the leading spirit in the organization of the Church of the Brethren in the year 1708.

After a series of persecutions in Europe and disposing of all his wealth to help the persecuted Brethren, he came to America. Here he continued his preaching ministry, study of the scriptures, and publishing of books until his death in 1735.

JOHN NAAS HALL

John Naas was a spiritual leader of the Brethren on two continents. He was born in Westphalia, Germany, in the year 1670. After uniting with the Brethren at Creyfeld, and answering the call to the Christian ministry he toured far and near preaching the Gospel of Christ. Naas was known as a wise and tolerant leader, and was in opposition to the narrow religious views of his day.

At perhaps the invitation of Alexander Mack, Sr., he came to America in 1733. Naas settled at Amwell, New Jersey, where he was the organizer of Amwell Congregation. His influence was felt far and near in the colonial Church of the Brethren.

Elder Naas was known to be broad-minded, large-hearted, eloquent in preaching, a good writer and a loyal a follower of Christ.

CHRISTOPHER SAUR LIBRARY AND LOUNGE

Christopher Saur, Sr. was one of the leading spirits in the Church of the Brethren, and known throughout Colonial America for his printing establishment at Germantown, Pennsylvania. He received his education at Halle and the University of Marberg, Germany, and became acquainted with the Brethren at Schwatzwnau, Germany. However, he likely did not unite with the church until he migrated to Lancaster County between 1724 and 1730.

In 1731 Saur and his son returned to Germantown where in 1738 they began the enterprise of printing. Knowing of the difficulties individuals had in crossing the Atlantic, he often met the ships upon their landing in Philadelphia and conveyed sick and needy individuals to his own home in his own carriage. Here he nursed the physically ill back to health and clothed and fed the destitute without charge. He was known as the Good Samaritan of Germantown.

BRETHREN SERVICE AND DAN WEST ROOM

This room commemorates the Brethren heritage perhaps in a way that no other room is able to do. Early church leaders were noted for their generosity to the poor and needy. Alexander Mack, founder of the church, was a wealthy man who gave his entire fortune to assist the poor. Adrian Pfau, an early deacon, distributed to the poor the equivalent of \$100,000. In 1770 the Germantown Brethren opened a home for the aged and poor in the area. This was probably the first of its kind in America.

It would be impossible to numerate the many varied services, contributions of the Brethren, but the present day Brethren Service Program was stimulated by the excellent work in Spain by Dan West, Martha Rupel, David Bliceknstaff and Paul Baruman, Jr. during the late revolution.

PASTORS

J.C. Wine 1974
Galen Brumbaugh 1975-1990
Joel & Kathie Nogle 1983-1988
Tracy Wenter Sadd 1990-1993
L. Gene Bucher 1991-1996
Keith Hollenberg 1995-1998
Robert Vroom 1998
Jennifer Zurin 1999

OFFICE STAFF

Naomi Moyer
Jean Caldwell

LICENSED TO MINISTRY

Jeanine Wine
Janet Ober Miller
Jennifer Zurin

ORGANISTS

Matora Hostetter
Lorraine Gingrich Martin

Gloria Eitnier
Jean Longenecker
Gloria Brumbaugh
Bernice Eby
Gretchen Brock

CHOIR DIRECTORS

Corinne Nissley – Senior Choir
George Houck
Barry Carper

Nancy Haas – Youth Choir
Deb Bendit
Heather Carper
Robin Dum

Linda Carper – Children’s Choir
Laurie Lefever
Diane Garber

Joel Nogle – Handbell Choir
Lorraine Martin

CUSTODIANS

Wilbur Hostetter
Wilbert Carper
Julia Gladfelter
Carlene Strait
Doris Wright
Ray Wright

CHURCH MODERATORS

Paul Cope 1974-1981
Jay Hollinger 1982-1987
Thomas Fritz 1988-1993
Todd Basom 1994-1996
Thomas Cope 1997-

INTERIM PASTORS

Bill Walters 1989
Bill Walters 1990
J.C. Wine 1994
Bill Walters 1998

RESETTLED FAMILIES**Vietnam**

Tuyen and Nhung Dinh
Phoung Dinh
Oanh Dinh
Anh Dinh

Laos

Touy Chanthansinh
Noy Chanthansinh
Chanmary Chanthansinh
Lynn Chanthansinh
Lo Chanthansinh

Cambodia

Chhin Chea and Tay Prak
Vorn Chea
Van Chea
Chhrey Chea
Thay Chea
Keo Chea

PAST AND PRESENT TIDBITS

ANDREW & HUGO RELIEF: These were two destructive hurricanes and donations for the devastated areas were brought to the John Naas Hall. The donations of food, clothing, etc. were loaded into trucks and then distributed.

CELEBRATION: In May 1993, J.C. Wine, Norman Bowers and J. Norman Weaver each celebrated fifty years of service in the Brethren ministry.

COBYS: In 1980, the Atlantic Northeast District of the Church of the Brethren started COBYS as a foster care agency with an office in our church. Placements were made primarily with families located in Lancaster and Lebanon counties. In 1985 the Group Home for teenage boys, located in Manheim, became operational. Our church provided weekly bible Study and recreation for these boys who also attended our Sunday morning worship service. The foster care program was expanded in 1987 to include services to younger children. Since 1990 COBYS counseling services have been provided in the towns of Oregon, Quarryville, Palmyra, Phoenixville and the Germantown section of Philadelphia. The counseling centers are a response to the overwhelming need for family services in our wider communities.

FAMILY NIGHT: Wednesday evenings were designated as “Family Night” and consisted of Bible Study, choir practice, and a class on crafts. It was up to an individual to choose what he wanted to participate in.

GIRL SCOUT COOKIES: Every year, for two days in March, the girl scouts in the Hempfield area use our church as a distribution center for cookies.

HEMPFIELD CHURCH SOFTBALL TEAM: Our church team has competed in the Manheim Church League for twenty-five years. The team enjoyed many successful seasons and has won league, division and state titles, as well as winning many tournaments. The team has a record of over 300 wins. Winning or losing was not the only goal. In addition to winning or losing a game, many friendships and fellowships were established, as well as the skills of softball. There is a requirement in the church league for each player to attend our church service a minimum of two weeks per month. Anyone between the ages of 13-99 is eligible to play.

KIDS CLUB: A program for children ages 3-12. It ran October and November, and February and March from 6-7pm on Wednesday evenings. It provided an informal setting, teaching Christian care and love as well as Biblical values. The program continued three years.

LADIES PRAYER BREAKFAST: This group, started in 1992, has been meeting every Wednesday at 6:00am. The time was chosen to accommodate the employed women. The group has Bible Study, prayer and they share joys and concerns.

MOTION AND DEVOTION: A group of women met twice a week to exercise to Christian music. The hour-long session ended with devotions.

OUTREACH: The church actively supports Brotherhood, district and community outreach ministries.

QUILTING: The Homebuilder’s Class donates money for quilts for the auctions. Five or six women quilt one day a week. After the quilting is finished, someone binds the quilt. A quilt is usually made every year and work is started in February.

R & R: This was a program designed for mothers to have “free time” on Wednesday morning. Mothers could drop off their children at church and be assured they were well taken care of while they had some rest and relaxation.

SCOUTING: The Hempfield Church of the Brethren has chartered Cub Scout Pack 337 since 1994. This Pack offers boys a way to learn about the great outdoors and how they can take care of themselves and the environment. In addition, they have also been organizing the Special Friend’s Christmas party and are always willing to perform work projects whenever the church is in need.

SEWING: Ladies meet for sewing the second Wednesday of every month. There is a lot of preparation before the ladies meet. Material is cut into squares and the squares are sewed together at someone’s home. Then it is brought to the church and a filling is put in and a back on the it is knotted. When the comforters are finished, they are donated to Mission Work.

SPECIAL FRIENDS: A program was begun in 1980 for people with disabilities. This program known as Special friends, has continued through the years and is conducted by caring people who reach out to them. It consists of varied activities that provide new challenges for everyone involved. Participants play games, sing songs, make crafts and enjoy time-out for refreshments and informal sharing and fellowship.

Another program for the developmentally disabled is Expressions of Love and Praise, which has been in existence for about 10 years and is a worship service, held the first Friday of each month. In this program, the developmentally disabled assist in ushering, song-leading, greeting, “prayer and share” time and meditation. “Camp Sonshine” began in 1994 and is a day camp for the disabled. This day camp is staffed Hempfield volunteers and consists of Bible study, music, crafts nature/recreation and special afternoon activities.

SUB SALE: Our softball team is a financially self-supporting team. Each April we have our annual sub sale. The team members, families, coaches and friends prepare and sell the subs.

TUTORING: A six-week summer program was established in conjunction with the East Petersburg Elementary School for remedial help to youngsters in the areas of reading and math.

The resettled families had to learn to speak English, so our church began a tutoring program. The Vietnamese children mentioned that by the time they finished 4th grade in their country, they would know all the words in their language. They were amazed to learn the person teaching them still didn’t know all the words in the English language.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL: This began as a weeklong evening activity for Hempfield children and children of the community. The program consists of opening activities, Bible study, crafts, music, snack and recreation. The last two years our Bible School has been a one-day activity.

VOLLEYBALL: With the availability of a gym, volleyball can be played throughout the year. We participated in a Wednesday evening league with about 6 different churches of the Brethren from this area. Most of the games were co-ed, but we did have an all-men’s league in cooperation with the Mountville C.O.B. The district usually sponsors a volleyball tournament at E-town College the first Saturday in January. Our co-ed team came in first place in 1991 from among some of the best teams in our area. Our men’s teams made it to the finals a number of times. Our women’s team also came in first in 1986.

WEDNESDAY MORNING WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY: The women meet each week to pray, study God's word and grow together in faith. While wonderful volunteers play with their children, the women work towards being better wives, mothers, and disciples of Christ. The women find this time of fellowship to be a highlight of their week.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP FOOD & CRAFT BAZAARS: For several years the Women's Fellowship sponsored a bazaar in November as a fundraiser to support different causes. Several people donated crafts, home spun good, and Christmas ornaments. In addition, there was a special plant table. We also served homemade soups, bar-b-que and baked goods. Christmas candy was also a favorite. This was a fun event uniting the women in the church in a worthwhile cause.

WORK PROJECTS: Many youth and adults contribute their time and money to projects of relief and reconstruction.

VISION 2003

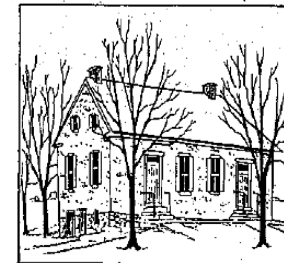
To encourage each other to grow in a personal relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. By loving God, serving others, and allowing the Holy Spirit to guide our lives.



Neffsville House – 1918

HEMPFIELD CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

WHERE FROM?



East Petersburg House – 1918

1918 – The Mountville Congregation divided, becoming Muntville Congregation and East Petersburg congregation. East Petersburg, at that time, got three church houses; Neffsville, Salunga and East Petersburg.

1923 – A new church house was built in East Petersburg.

1924 – The East Petersburg Congregation took on the project of operating a community, Bible School. This has been continued successfully every summer since then.

1948 – Salunga and East Petersburg divided, forming two separate congregations.

1952 – The use of the Neffsville House was discontinued.

1975 – Salunga and East Petersburg reunited becoming the Hempfield Church of the Brethren, pledging, at the same time, to erect a new facility somewhere between the two locations.

1975 – On October 12, ground was broken at the new site.

1975 – In November, the financial drive completed, raising enough capital to go forward with the plans for the building.

1976 – In March, construction was begun.

1977 – In January, the new building occupied.

1982 – In September, mortgage burning.



East Petersburg House – 1975



Salunga House 1918-1975