

*News
from the
Evangelical
and Reformed Historical Society*



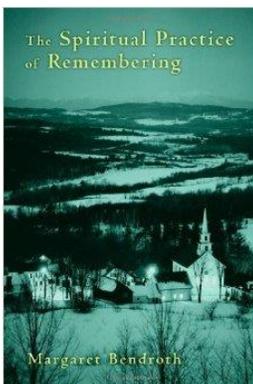
Save the date!

September 26, 2015.

The 2015 Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, September 26, 2015 at the Hafer Center, Philip Schaff Library, on the campus of the Lancaster Theological Society, Lancaster, PA.

Our keynote speaker will be Margaret (Peggy) Bendroth, Executive Director of the Congregational Library & Archives in Boston, <http://www.congregationallibrary.org/>. Author or editor of several books, her most recent book, *The Spiritual Practice of Remembering*, summons readers to remember and honor the past.

Note: ERHS has ordered several copies of the book directly from the publisher (Eerdmans) and is able to offer a special price:



\$10 plus \$2 shipping for members,
\$16 plus \$2 shipping for nonmembers.

Please contact us if you would like a copy!

ERHS ARCHIVIST HONORED UPON RETIREMENT

By the Rev. Judith A. Meier, OCC

The Rev. Richard R. Berg was declared Archivist Emeritus of the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society at the annual meeting of the Society in late September. Berg served faithfully as archivist of the 151-year old society for 16 years, while at the same time serving as Director of Library Services at Lancaster Theological seminary from 1988 to 2014. A memorial resolution honoring Lowell Zuck was also made at the meeting.

The Rev. Dr. Richard Christensen presented a delightful program about the history of the National Youth Caravan, which had its beginnings in the Evangelical and Reformed Church in St. Louis in 1948; drew upon leadership from such folks as Ethel Shellenberger, Carl Bade, Herman Ahrens, Ed Schlingman, Henry Tani, and many others; and extended its reach throughout the country and into the newly created United Church of Christ, finally coming to a conclusion in 1968. More than 700 college-age young people

participated in the Caravan program during those 20 years, and an astounding number of them became ordained ministers, Christian education workers, missionaries, and spouses of clergy. Caravaners were sent out in teams of four, a carefully balanced team consisting of men and women of various races and even denominations. For more than a month each summer the teams would spend a week at a host church, participating in work projects, preaching, and meeting with youth groups; and then they would move on to the next host church.

Following Christensen's presentation, the Rev. Donald Flick, another Caravaner, showed photos of two of his teams. A lively discussion ensued among the former Caravaners who traveled to Lancaster for the program. Displays of photos, news clippings, and other memorabilia were exhibited in Hafer Center and in the ERHS Archives.

The presentation and the annual meeting were audio- and video-recorded, and a DVD is available from ERHS. If you would like a copy, please send a donation to the ERHS.

I want to express to you my deep thanks for the very meaningful citation and for being named archivist emeritus. Both touched my heart deeply and were very unexpected. You know I will continue to work for the Society.

Richard Berg

ERHS Receives Grant

We are pleased to announce that ERHS received a grant in late December from the Quadrangle Historical Research Foundation, <http://www.quadranglefoundation.org/>.

The mission of the Foundation is "to promote community development through historical research and heritage initiatives. [Its] resources are dedicated to grants, awards, and partnerships that assist museums, local archives and heritage organizations, as well as students and scholars interested in the history of Pennsylvania, 1500-1800."

The gift is targeted for the purchase of special book supports and archival supplies that will enable patrons to use our unique historical materials in the least-harmful way possible.

RECENT ACCESSIONS

Accessions in late 2014 include scrapbooks and photographs from several Youth Caravan participants, including Joanne Klueter, Lois Braun Mueller, Donald Flick, Arlene Umstead, Richard Benner, Robert Kreisinger, and Verna Niehaus Faisst, as well as H. Wayne Peck's autobiography, *The Living Tapestry*, given by Carl and Marie Bade.

In addition, ERHS received photographs and materials relating to Ed Schlingmann and the Camps and Conferences programs from Carl and Marie Bade, materials from Trinity Church in Concord, NC from Harold Holste, and items and church records, including a Memorial Bookcase, from Shared Ministry (was Fourth Reformed Church) of Harrisburg, PA.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Spring book sale volunteer sign up and donated book dropoff

Please notify Jennifer Groff by May 1st if you are able to help or have books to donate (**no** magazines or journals).

We will need volunteers May 13-14 to help set up, as well as during the sale May 18-20.

Thank you! erhs@lanasterseminary.edu

Spring book sale, May 18-20

Held in the Hafer Center (second floor of the library building), Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, PA.

The annual used book sale co-hosted by ERHS and Philip Schaff Library of the Lancaster Theological Seminary.

2015 Annual Meeting of the ERHS

Hafer Center, Lancaster Theological Seminary
September 26, 2015

Keynote speaker will be Margaret Bendroth, Executive Director of the Congregational Library & Archives.

IN MEMORIAM

We have learned of the deaths of the following ERHS members:

The Rev. Glenn J. Rader (1931-2014)

The Rev. Richard Albright Cheek Sr. (1927-2014)

The Rev. Francis R. Daugherty (1920-2015).

Francis Daugherty served as cataloger for the UCC and ERHS Archives from 1987, and as Interim Archivist from 1989 to 1991. He continued to be a current supporting member of ERHS.

And of the following former Youth Caravan Members:

The Rev. George Bahner (1937-2014)

Shirley Bahner (2012)

Peggy Maslowski (2014)

Mary Lou Pettit (2014)

Clara McKee Rader (2012)

Jim Rinne

Myron Ross

Please contact ERHS at erhs@lanasterseminary.edu if you have news of Caravaners or ERHS members to report.

Union and Merger in the Reformed Church in the United States¹

by Rev. Richard R. Berg

Archivist Emeritus, Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society

That they may all be one (John 17:21). These words were partially realized at the uniting service of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Christian churches in Cleveland on June 25, 1957. These were words of hope for a new denomination that proclaims “God is still speaking,” calling the UCC to a mission of unity in Christ. The symbol chosen fifty years ago as the visual representation of the understanding of church and mission continues to be a powerful symbol today. The crown symbolizes the sovereignty of Christ who expresses God’s power through love; the cross recalls the suffering of Christ, his arms outstretched on the wood of the cross for the salvation for all; the orb represents the world, divided yet whole, with the local, national and international levels (Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, the ends of the earth, Acts 1:8), bringing God’s love to every corner of the earth; the motto, a prayer really, reflects the historic commitment of the UCC to the restoration of unity among the separated churches of Jesus Christ, and our faith that the day will come when all humanity will be gathered by God into one family (What is the Meaning of the UCC Symbol?). This symbol illustrates concretely the vision held by those founders in 1957. But the symbol also represents the culmination of over 300 years of discussions, agreements, schisms, disappointments and unions among the four predecessor denominations. This is a history which demonstrates how difficult it is to take Jesus’ words seriously, but how joyful it is when even small steps are taken toward the goal “that they may all be one.”

One part of the story which led to the joyful celebration in 1957 is that of the efforts at union of the German Reformed Church (U.S.), later the Reformed Church in the United States. It is a story that begins during a prolonged period of war and violence in Europe during the late 17th through the first three quarters of the 18th centuries.

The Thirty Years War, ending with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, was intended to settle the religious differences in Europe between Catholics, Lutherans and Reformed groups and assure the recognition of the Reformed faith. Large areas of Europe had been the battle ground for that conflict. Recovery had hardly been effected before France invaded again the same areas of Germany as in the Thirty Years’ War in the 1680’s in an effort to gain more territory and influence. Cities were burned to the ground, the land laid waste, the people reduced to penury. The Palatinate was occupied by France which suppressed Protestants and levied heavy taxes. With no time for recovery, the War of Spanish Succession was fought in the same areas of Germany from 1701-1714 in the midst of which were bad harvests (Dunn 9-11). These wars devastated the land and economy of western Europe, particularly the Palatinate area of Germany, but also Alsace in France and areas of southern Germany. The poorer agricultural workers, but also the growing middle class business owners, tradespeople, and craftspeople found the basis of their livelihood destroyed. German immigration to the American colonies, a trickle before 1709, suddenly became a flood.

Germans and Swiss Germans settled in increasing numbers in Georgia, the Carolinas, New Jersey, New York, Maryland, Virginia and particularly Pennsylvania. The religious backgrounds of these early immigrants included Mennonites and other Anabaptist sects, Moravians, Lutherans, and Reformed. Often with little more than the clothes on their backs, sometimes with a Bible, hymnbook,

¹ This article was originally given as an illustrated lecture before the annual meeting of the Shenandoah Association, UCC, in Harrisonburg, VA on October 22, 2006 and revised for publication.

and a book of printed sermons and devotions, these folk began to settle into new lives. After establishing homes they began to form congregations, meeting in houses, barns or open air. With few pastors, these fledgling congregations often drafted a layperson to read scripture, lead hymns, and read a published sermon. With many immigrants in the same circumstances, sharing a common language, a common culture, and a common understanding of the importance of religion in their lives, cooperation and support was natural.²

Those of the Reformed faith, while desiring to worship according to their own understanding and tradition, realized that cooperation would not only be beneficial but would also fulfill Christ's command to love one another. Thus begins a long history of cooperation and union discussions between the Reformed Church and other denominations.

An early figure in the history of the Reformed Church who had a keen interest in church union was Henry Antes (1701-1755) who born in Freinsheim, in the Palatinate. He arrived in Pennsylvania in 1721 and soon became active in the Reformed Church in the Philadelphia area. He was greatly touched by pietism which influenced Reformed, Lutheran and Moravian congregations (Hinke 314).

Pietism was concerned mainly with the inner religious life of individuals which was then manifested in the world through acts of love and charity. Among the developers of pietism, Philipp Jacob Spener (1635-1705) a Lutheran pastor in Frankfort, Germany gave the movement great impetus among both Lutheran and Reformed people. Spener felt the church was in moral and spiritual decay because of the devastation of war, that clergy were interested only in their own personal advancement, and that theologians were interested only in promulgating their own ideas. To address this situation, Spener sought to institute a new reformation, a reformation of the spirit in the lives of individuals and churches. He developed five principles which guided his work: formation of small lay groups called *collegia pietatis* for Bible study and prayer; spiritual ministry to each other; love in action; avoidance of theological controversies; and the importance of spiritual along with intellectual formation in theological education. Pietism emphasized individual feelings and emotions, works of charity, belief in Christian unity rather than theological arguments and the necessity of doctrinal agreement. Devout and active in the church, pietists believed in an educated clergy and laity and observed a high moral code (Glatfelter 42-43). Pietism quickly spread from Spener's Lutheran church in Frankfort all over Europe, to other denominations, and traveled with the waves of German immigrants to the American colonies.

With this pietistic influence, Antes was interested in the unity of all Christians. In 1741, Count von Zinzendorf, leader of the Moravians, stayed with Antes encouraging him to call a meeting of all German pietists. The announcement printed for the meeting called people to gather on January 1, 1742 ". . . not for the purpose of disputing with one another, but to confer in love on the important articles of faith, in order to see how near all could come together in fundamental points" (Dubbs 114). Present were representatives from the Lutherans, Reformed, Moravians, Schwenkfelders, Mennonites, Brethren and other pietists and mystics. Seven meetings were held during the next six months. From these meetings was organized "The Congregation of God in the Spirit" within which several denominational groups, called tropes, were organized. It was never intended that the new organization become a new denomination but what might be referred to as a federation of

² For an in-depth discussion of the reasons for German emigration to America and the Germans' early settlement in Pennsylvania see Good, James I. History of the Reformed Church of Germany 1620-1890 (1894); Good, James I. History of the Reformed Church in the United States 1725-1792 (1899); Miller, Daniel. Early History of the Reformed Church in Pennsylvania (1906); Dubbs, Joseph Henry. Historic Manual of the Reformed Church in the United States (1888); Dubbs, Joseph Henry. The Reformed Church in Pennsylvania (1902); Dunn, David, Ed. History of the Evangelical and Reformed Church (1961)

denominations working together to build up Christ's church and provide spiritual formation for all people. Unfortunately this first attempt at cooperation soon led to suspicion, accusation, and withdrawal of support.

The Reformed trope was led by John Bechtel (1690-1777), licensed preacher at the Reformed Church at Germantown, Pennsylvania. In an effort to further unity Bechtel wrote a new catechism which was based on the 1532 decrees of the Synod of Berne (Switzerland). Meant to bypass the Heidelberg Catechism, many Reformed people and pastors did not receive the new work kindly. Further tension was created by Bechtel's ordination and appointment by Zinzendorf to oversee the Reformed churches in Pennsylvania. These moves alienated most of the Reformed clergy, including John Philip Boehm who had been appointed to the same office by the Synods of North and South Holland which supervised all affairs of the German Reformed Church in America. Samuel Guldin (1664-1745), another leading Reformed Church pietist, also objected to the proposed union stating in a published pamphlet that for any union to be authentic "there must first be a union in Christ before there can be a union with each other. It must be a union from above, rather than a work of man" (Maxfield 52). The other participating denominations also found fault with the plan and drifted away until the "Congregation of God in the Spirit" was reorganized after 1748 into the Moravian Church in America (Maxfield 52). Thus the first attempt at union by the Reformed Church ended without result.

Close ties to the Lutherans seemed natural. Here were church members who came from the same parts of Germany and Switzerland, used the same language, shared the same culture, and often used the same hymnals and devotional works. Such ties, along with little money but with a desire to establish churches and parochial schools, brought the Reformed and Lutheran groups together to build union churches and schools. The union church buildings were jointly funded by both congregations as was the salary of the school teacher. Worship services were held at different times, or on alternate Sundays, and each congregation usually kept its own style of church government and its own records. There is an old adage that the only difference between the two congregations was in the recitation of the Lord's Prayer where the Reformed said "Unser Vater" and the Lutherans "Vater Unser" (Dunn 70).

Throughout the 18th century the Reformed and Lutheran clergy worked closely together, one often baptizing children of the other denomination when that pastor was unable to do so, or administering the Lord's Supper. The journals of Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg, the most important Lutheran pastor in the 18th century, contain many references to his cordial relations, discussions, and services with Reformed clergy. Likewise the diaries and letters of Reformed pastors reflect a similar relationship with Lutheran clergy.³

In 1787 the two denominations jointly founded Franklin College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and considered establishing a joint seminary as part of the college. The seminary did not materialize, each denomination founding its own school during the first quarter of the 19th century. Merger talks between the two denominations began in 1822 when the Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania and Adjacent States appointed a study committee to consider union with the Reformed Church. The Ohio Synod of the Reformed Church proposed the same in 1823. Two Pennsylvania Classes of the Reformed Church petitioned Synod in favor of union in 1828 and the Ohio Synod again proposed the same in 1832 (Maxfield 185). A final attempt at union was made in 1836 when the Lutheran delegates to the Reformed Church Synod meeting proposed union or federation. Unfortunately the talks did not

³ See the manuscript collections and later transcriptions of 18th century Reformed clergy in the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society as well as the multi-volume *Fathers of the Reformed Church* edited by Henry Harbaugh and others and Hinke, William J. *Ministers of the German Reformed Congregations in Pennsylvania and other Colonies in the Eighteenth Century* (1951).

result in either. By then the time for merger seemed to have passed and each denomination entered into discussions with other denominations, or with branches of their own which had split off years earlier. Several reasons for the failure can be suggested: in the 1820's the Reformed Church was deeply involved in the establishment of its own seminary and faced serious opposition to, and schism from, that issue. In opposition to the establishment of a seminary, a small group of churches and clergy broke away from the Reformed Church and formed an independent Synod in 1822, not rejoining the church until 1836. There was controversy over the location of the seminary, and the funding of the school was precarious at best (Appel). These issues were not adequately settled until the seminary was finally moved a second time to Mercersburg, Pennsylvania, in 1837. A further reason for the failure of union between the two denominations was a small but vocal group within the Lutheran Church which began to point out doctrinal differences and the loss of their distinctive Lutheran-ness if union with the Reformed Church was realized. This group finally prevailed in their opposition to union and by 1872 the Lutheran Church rejected pulpit recognition and altar fellowship with all non-Lutherans (Maxfield 185).

It is interesting to note that although there was no organic union between the Reformed Church and Lutheran Church, the westward expansion of the country and the wave of "new German" immigrants in the 1830s and 1840s resulted in mission cooperation between the two groups. Many of these "new Germans" grew up in the Evangelical Church, the result of a merger of Reformed and Lutheran congregations in Prussia in 1817. As these Germans left their homeland and began to settle in western Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Missouri and Texas, the existing Lutheran and Reformed churches saw the wisdom of working together to minister among the German people in these areas, to help establish congregations, and to supply ordained clergy. The Reformed Church had a number of strong advocates for forming a single, united denomination in the West. Friedrich Augustus Rauch (1806-1841), professor of theology at the Reformed Church theological seminary in Mercersburg and president of Marshall College, wrote a series of articles for the Home Missionary, the journal of the American Home Missionary Society, in which he strongly advocated for a united church. Rauch wrote that with the union so popular in Germany, "it will be a vain attempt, with perhaps few exceptions, to sever again those, who by their own vote have favored and promoted the union in Europe, and to convert into Lutherans and Reformed, immigrant Germans who have grown up in a United [Evangelical] Church in Germany" (Yoder 44). Such a union was effected in the Mid-West in 1840 with the uniting of several small groups of evangelical churches into the Deutscher Evangelischer Kirchenverein des Westens or the German Evangelical Synod of the West (later named the Evangelical Synod of North America). A number of Reformed clergy contributed to the growth and development of the Evangelical Synod. Johann Georg Buttner, a Lutheran educated in Germany but ordained by the West Pennsylvania Classis of the Reformed Church became pastor of the newly organized German Evangelical Church in St. Louis in 1834. Karl Daubert (1801-1875) ordained by the Reformed Church Free Synod, served the German Evangelical Church near Pittsburgh in 1833. Philip Schaff (1819-1893), Reformed Church theologian, church historian, and professor at the seminary in Mercersburg, was instrumental in promoting the new Evangelical Synod in his magazine Der Deutsche Kirchenfreund and through his correspondence and personal contacts. In writing to the Synod of the Evangelical Church in Germany in 1854, the denomination in which he grew up before coming to the United States in 1844, Schaff voiced the hope that the [Evangelical Synod] would live up to its original intention of being "an organic union of the entire faithful Lutheran and faithful Reformed Church, German and English, in one, I might say, Evangelical Catholic Church" (Yoder 49). Schaff's hymn-book, Deutsches Gesangbuch published in 1859, greatly influenced the compilation of the Evangelisches Gesangbuch of the Evangelical Synod published in 1861. It is interesting to note the success of this ecumenical cooperation between the Lutherans and Reformed in the West when all attempts at union, except for individual union churches, in the East failed. This success ultimately

led to the merger of the Evangelical Synod of North America and the Reformed Church in the United States to form the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

Out of all of the German church groups which immigrated to the American colonies, perhaps the closest to the German Reformed was the Dutch Reformed Church. Because of the devastation of the lands and depleted economy in Germany, the Reformed Church in Germany petitioned the Reformed Church in Holland to be the sponsoring and supervisory body for the German Reformed churches in America. Thus both the Dutch Reformed and the German Reformed churches in America came under the jurisdiction of the Synods of North and South Holland and the Classis of Amsterdam which created a very close tie between the two groups. Both churches recognized a common doctrinal basis in the Heidelberg Catechism, although the Dutch also recognized the Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dort. During the 18th century several German Reformed men were ordained to ministry by Dutch Reformed clergy upon approval from Holland, and ministerial standing was transferred between the two when requested. There were talks to establish a joint seminary. Each group sent official delegates to the other's General Synod meetings from 1813 to 1853.³ The first of a proposed series of triennial conventions was held in 1844 with a second in 1847. However, the Dutch soon withdrew because they considered the tenants of the new Mercersburg theology of Philip Schaff, John Williamson Nevin, Henry Harbaugh and others to be heretical. Discussions were resumed in 1870 to 1872 but again doctrinal standards prevented union. Another series of discussions occurred in 1887 proposing union using common governing and program boards but maintaining separate synods. This proposal was approved by the German Reformed General Synod of 1890 but rejected by the Dutch because they felt differing doctrinal standards would alienate too many of their congregations.

While no unions or mergers took place during the 18th and 19th centuries, a renewed spirit of cooperation among denominations was evident beginning in the last quarter of the 19th century. A number of factors contributed to this cooperation: the increasing issues of widespread poverty, squalid living conditions, poor health, lack of education and lapsed morality in the U.S. led the churches to take seriously the Gospel message of feeding the hungry, housing the poor, ministering to all God's people; the continued opening up of the far-flung reaches of the world to exploration and colonization was seen as an opportunity to spread the Gospel to all the nations; and the realization that none of these opportunities for ministry could be handled by individual denominations. To address these and other common problems and concerns a number of inter-denominational and international organizations were established. The Reformed Church in the United States was always listed among the members of such organizations.

The Alliance of the Reformed Churches Throughout the World Holding the Presbyterian System was established in July 1875 in London and attended by over 100 delegates from Presbyterian and Reformed churches all over the world. The Alliance, now called the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and still active today, discussed doctrine, polity, home and foreign missions, and social issues of mutual concern to the member churches. The Reformed Church sent its first delegates to the 1884 meeting of the Alliance in Philadelphia. Rev. Dr. James I. Good became an influential member and convener of the Western section of the Alliance covering the United States. Dr. Good was particularly interested in inter-church aid with U.S. churches supplying material goods and funds to needy churches in Europe. Delegates were sent to all succeeding meetings with some becoming active in the various committees and commissions of the Alliance.⁴

⁴ See the published proceedings of the Alliance as well as reports of the Reformed Church delegates published in the proceedings of the General Synod.

The Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America was established in 1908. Through it the Reformed Church in the United States worked with many other denominations to address common problems in church and society. The Council's Commission on the Church and Social Service began work immediately concentrating its efforts in the field of industrial labor strife. During 1911 the Commission on Peace and Arbitration was organized, followed by commissions on evangelism, country life, education and foreign missions. In 1917 the General War-Time Commission was established to funnel aid to war-torn Europe. During and after World War II Church World Service handled nearly \$50,000,000 of overseas aid in money, clothing, food, and medical supplies. In 1950 the Federal Council merged with seven other inter-denominational agencies to form the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

The culmination of ecumenical and union efforts of the Reformed Church in the United States began during the first quarter of the 20th century when ecumenical cooperation and Christian unity were playing important roles in American and international church life. The Federal Council of Churches, the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910, the Stockholm Conference on Life and Work in 1925, the World Conference on Faith and Order at Lausanne in 1927 and the Jerusalem Conference in 1928 included among the attendees members of the Reformed Church in the United States and the Evangelical Synod of North America. With the fervent belief that churches were called to unity, members of both of these denominations were in conversation with each other, holding informal meetings in Baltimore in 1927 and Appleton, Wisconsin, in 1928. George Warren Richards (1869-1955), President of the Reformed Church, was invited to give a series of lectures at the Evangelical Synod's district meetings in 1928. John Baltzer, President of the Evangelical Synod, announced the appointment of a Commission on Closer Relations With Other Church Bodies in 1929. That Commission along with its counterpart in the Reformed Church, the Commission on Closer Union, had entered into three-way union negotiations with the United Brethren in Christ. These negotiations were so successful that a plan of union was proposed. The plan was adopted by the Evangelical Synod and the Reformed Church; however, the Church of the United Brethren in Christ had to withdraw (Dunn 279-283).

In the meantime, the Reformed Church was also in conversation with the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. and the Reformed (Dutch) Church in America for possible union. When those talks did not result in any action, the Reformed Church resumed negotiations with the Evangelical Synod in 1932. A final plan of union was approved that same year. Why union? The Plan of Union expresses it well: "each denomination exists not for itself but as an agency for the advancement of the kingdom of God" and that in the proposed union "the essential principles of the Christian faith and life, common to all, would not only be conserved but would also be more effectually applied" toward that end (Dunn 285). The plan stressed faith rather than polity. As Carl Schneider wrote: "The premise [of the plan] subordinated institutional interests to the affirmations of faith, since a faith strong enough to call for union would find the way to overcome the forms that divide" (Dunn 285). The plan did not go into detail about what the structure of the church would look like and did not promulgate a particular statement of beliefs, accepting instead the historical confessions of the two denominations. Each congregation was assured of their freedom to establish their own worship pattern. The plan was overwhelmingly approved by the classes of the Reformed Church and the districts of the Evangelical Synod and the formal celebration of union took place the evening of June 26, 1934 in Cleveland. The Evangelical and Reformed Church was born.

The words of Rev. Paul Press, President of the Evangelical Synod, and of Rev. F. William Leich of the Reformed Church were true not only of this 1934 merger but were also prophetic and applicable to another merger which was to take place in less than 25 years. President Press said to

the final meeting of the Evangelical Synod: "If our action today shall be in accord with the will of God, we will not be chiefly interested in the mechanics of the merger. We must not be concerned about technical difficulties which may disturb us. God forbid that we should stoop to means and methods to gain an advantage. Principally, we enter into a spiritual union with the Reformed Church, and if our approach is made on the basis of the spiritual implications of the merger we need not become agitated about possible technical difficulties. As we have been guided by the Spirit of God in the development of the negotiations, so will we be directed by the same Spirit into the correct organization adjustments which will become necessary." In his sermon to the Reformed Church Rev. Leich said: "Christianity has ever been in danger of hardening about organization, polity, buildings, rituals, dogmas . . . To free ourselves from such bondage or to maintain the freedom we have achieved requires more than ordinary courage . . . and a more sacrificial spirit than a comfortable age produces . . . The great issue within Christianity is not between systems and [ortho]-doxies, but a battle for the holy as the one all-inclusive gift of Christ" (Dunn 287-288).

The Constitution and By-Laws of the new church were hardly declared to be in effect in 1940 before the Evangelical and Reformed Church began informal union talks with the Congregational Christian churches. The minutes of September 1941 of the Reformed Church General Council record: "Chairman [George W.] Richards reported that the Committee on Church Relations has had informal conversations [on March 18] and will have another in about a month [Oct. 13] with the corresponding commission of the Congregational Christian Churches. These are absolutely informal and reports should not be made regarding them until the meeting of the General Synod" (General Council 9/1941). At the General Synod of 1942 the Committee on Closer Relations With Other Churches was "authorized to continue its conversations with the Congregational Christian Churches" (General Council 1942). The Committee and its Congregational counterpart worked diligently, and by the 1944 General Synod meeting presented a third revised "Basis of Union." The work of the committees was approved by both denominations and a final version of the "Basis of Union" was completed in 1947. A series of "Interpretations" was prepared which defined in more detail points of the "Basis of Union." These "Interpretations" were approved in 1949 and a uniting General Synod was proposed for June 26, 1950. The union process was delayed by a legal injunction against union submitted by a Congregational Christian church in Brooklyn, New York. The suit alleged that the General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches did not have the right or authority to participate in the establishment of the proposed United Church based on Congregational polity and government.

With the settlement of this law suit in 1953 in favor of the General Council, negotiations were resumed in 1954 but proceeded under the shadow of a small but persistent anti-union group within the Congregational Christian churches. With the continuing work gaining momentum, all members of the joint committee and throughout most of both denominations felt they were being led by the Holy Spirit to this calling. The uniting General Synod was held June 25-27, 1957 in Cleveland. As part of the business of that Synod, commissions were appointed to prepare a constitution and statement of faith, to begin the process of consolidating funds, mission concerns, organizational structure and boundaries of associations and conferences (United Church of Christ. General Synod). The Statement of Faith was adopted at the General Synod of 1959 and the Constitution at the adjourned session of General Synod in July, 1960, and declared in force during the third General Synod in July, 1961. Thus, after only a quarter century of existence, the Evangelical and Reformed Church embarked on another journey in a continuing line of great faith ventures to bring to fruition the words of Jesus, "That they may all be one."

It is a tribute to our ancestors in the faith, ancestors who sacrificed much, who stepped out in faith, who stumbled and fell but who felt God's call to be a united and uniting church, a witness to Christ's love in the world that the United Church of Christ witnesses today.

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For a complete Bibliography, please contact ERHS.

The Evangelical & Reformed Historical Society

We are located on the second floor of the Philip Schaff Library, on the campus of the Lancaster Theological Seminary, 555 West James Street, Lancaster, PA 17603.

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Sermon Bibliography for Dr. James E. Wagner Part Two, by Phillip B. Anglin

This is an attempt to share a small glimmer of the vast number of sermons that the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society has archived. Below, one will find sermons preached by Dr. James E. Wagner, at St. Peter's Reformed Church, now St. Peter's UCC, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

The sermons are arranged in chronological order, identifying the biblical text, and whether he preached the sermon during the morning or evening hour. Fortunately, for that person doing research, Dr. Wagner left detailed notes. This installment begins with a sermon preached on 3 January 1932 and continues through an evening sermon preached on 28 February 1932.

According to *A History of the Evangelical and Reformed Church*, authored by David Dunn, et al., James E. Wagner, served as "... President of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and Co-President of the United Church of Christ, ... A native of Altoona, Pennsylvania and a graduate of Findlay College and the Lancaster Theological Seminary, he served as pastor of St. Peter's Church, Lancaster, for twenty-two years before being called to the leadership of the denomination. With the aid of the Ecumenical Travel Fund he ... traveled to the mission fields and to Europe ... [widening] the horizons of the denomination ... to make its voice known and its influence felt in national affairs."

January 1932

---. "The Sacrament of Fellowship. A Preparatory Sermon." MSS. Coll. 014, Box 003, ff. 003, Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society. Lancaster, PA.

Note: St. Luke 22:14-30.

Note: "St. Peter's, January 3, 1932."

---. "Life's Larger Loyalties. A New Year Sermon." MSS. Coll. 014, Box 003, ff. 003, Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society. Lancaster, PA.

Note: Colossians 3:1-17.

Note: "St. Peter's, January 3, 1932. P.M."

---. "A Young Man's Religion." MSS. Coll. 014, Box 003, ff. 003, Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society. Lancaster, PA.

Note: Matthew 19:16-22.

Note: "St. Peter's, January 10, 1932. 'College Night.' "

---. "The Church – The House of Gladness." MSS. Coll. 014, Box 003, ff. 003, Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society. Lancaster, PA.

Note: Psalm 122, 84. Cf. Psalm 95:1-7a; 100.

Note: "St. Peter's, January 17, 1932."

---. "The Strength of Youth." MSS. Coll. 014, Box 003, ff. 003, Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society. Lancaster, PA.

Note: I John 2:14. I Samuel 17:31-35, 37-50.

Note: "St. Peter's, January 17, 1932, Evening. "High School Nite."

---. "The Christian Life as Conflict." MSS. Coll. 014, Box 003, ff. 003, Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society. Lancaster, PA.

Note: I Cor. 9:24-10:12.

Note: "St. Peter's, January 24, 1932. Morning."

---. "Jesus' Tribute to Childhood." MSS. Coll. 014, Box 003, ff. 003, Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society. Lancaster, PA.

Note: Matthew 18:1-11.

Note: "St. Peter's, January 24, 1932. Evening."

---. "The Christian Life as Constant Victory." MSS. Coll. 014, Box 003, ff. 003, Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society. Lancaster, PA.

Note: II Cor. 11:23-12:10.

Note: "St. Peter's, January 31, 1932. Morning."

February 1932

---. "The Christian Life as Self-Expenditure." MSS. Coll. 014, Box 003, ff. 003, Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society. Lancaster, PA.

Note: I Corinthians 13:1-13. Luke 18:31-43. Luke 8:43-48.

Note: "St. Peter's, February 7, 1932. A.M."

---. " 'Rock of Ages, Cleft For Me.' – A Hymn-Sermon." MSS. Coll. 014, Box 003, ff. 003, Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society. Lancaster, PA.

Note: Psalm 18:2. Psalm 62:1-8.

Note: "St. Peter's, February 7, 1932. P.M."

---. "The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation. I. Missions and the Gospel of Reconciliation."

MSS. Coll. 014, Box 003, ff. 003, Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society. Lancaster, PA.

Note: II Corinthians 5:17-6:10.

Note: "St. Peter's, February 14, 1932. A.M. 1st Sunday in Lent."

---. "The Christian Doctrine of Reconciliation. II. The Divine Initiative In Reconciliation." MSS. Coll. 014, Box 003, ff. 003, Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society. Lancaster, PA.

Note: II Cor. 5:17-6:10. Or Isaiah 54:4-17. Or Isaiah 55.

Note: "St. Peter's – Feb. 21, 1932. A.M."

---. " 'He Leadeth Me, O Blessed Thought'. A Hyman-Sermon." MSS. Coll. 014, Box 003, ff. 003, Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society. Lancaster, PA.

Note: Psalm 23.

Note: "St. Peter's – Feb. 21, 1932. P.M."

---. " 'Jesus, Saviour, Pilot Me'. Hymn-Sermon". MSS. Coll. 014, Box 003, ff. 003, Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society. Lancaster, PA.

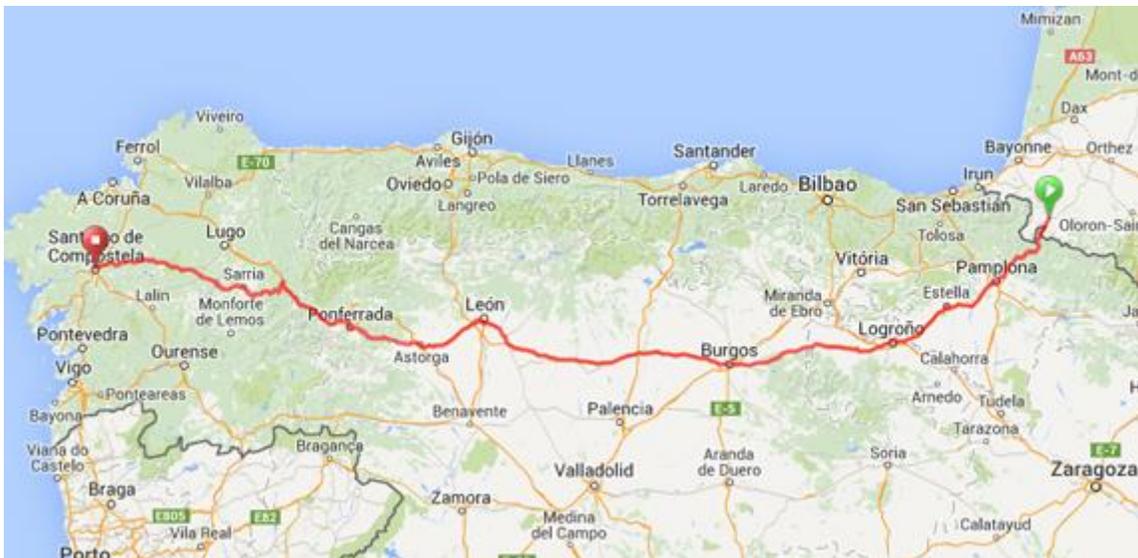
Note: Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 6:45-50.

Note: "St. Peter's – February 28, 1932. P.M."

ERHS Archivist sets off on a journey: El Camino de Santiago

Phillip B. Anglin

Did you ever have one of those nagging feelings that would not leave you alone? Well for me, it has been to walk the Camino de Santiago (or Route of Santiago de Compostela). I first learned of this pilgrimage while living in San Francisco. Immediately, it pierced my heart! I knew that I must walk it. Over the years, more and more people crossed my path who had made the pilgrimage. It would not be until a feisty woman in the Roman Catholic Church looked me in the face and said, "When are you going to do it?" that I made the decision right then and there.



<http://caminoways.com/ways/french-way-camino-frances/french-way-coach-tour>

I leave on February 25, 2015, flying first to Paris, and then taking the train to St. Jean Pied de Port in Basque France where I will begin the 487-mile journey. First crossing the Pyrenees, and then across the northern portion of Spain. My final destination is Santiago, Spain. I have allotted eight weeks for the trip. I would ask for your prayers as I make this soulful journey, tracing the footsteps of pilgrims who have walked this journey that originated in the ninth century.

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