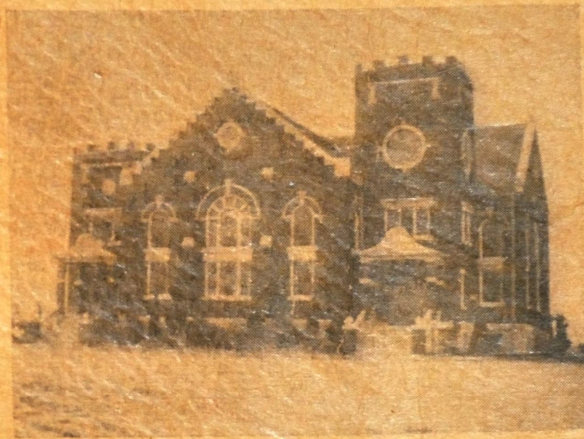


# **EPOCHS OF HISTORY**



**Of First Mennonite Church**

**of**

**Pretty Prairie, Kansas**

**1884 to 1954**

### **Foreword by John Hoag**

Because I believe church history to be an important part of our heritage, it seemed appropriate to dust off the covers of this book published so long ago. I have to marvel at the amount of work that Jonas and Lucy Stucky had to put into making this epoch of history. I have kept everything as it was, correcting a few of the errors. I ask for lenience in my attempt at recreating the pictures. I did the best I could do with what I had to work with. My wife Judy is the daughter of Lester and Verdene Schrag, (Still members of Pretty Prairie Mennonite Church). Republished September 2013.

*John and Judy Hoag*



**“LORD, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.”**

**Psalms 90:1**

## **FOREWORD**

Believing that these 70 years of the history of our church founded on the faith of our forefathers were an era of memorable events, hence the title "Epochs of History".

The aim and purpose of this book is to keep together and preserve in print material for future reference, which might otherwise be lost.

We are sorry for any omissions, errors or discrepancies in dates, etc., which may be due to incorrect or incomplete information; and especially are we sorry for mistakes on our part, as our source material was mostly in the German language and had to be translated, and in many instances we had to draw on our memory.

May we heartily thank everyone who had a part in making this book possible. We trust that kind readers will judge it leniently, and may God bless to His glory the toil and prayers that have gone into making of same. May it strengthen our faith and draw us closer together in Christian unity.

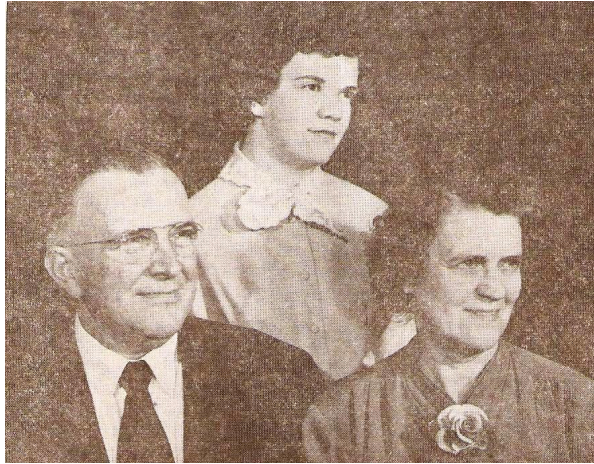
*Jonas A. Stucky*  
*Lucy Stucky (Assistant)*



### 3. LIFE STORY OF REV. HOWARD G. NYCE, D. D.

Howard G. Nyce, son of Moris E. and Annie Geissingner Nyce, was born July 6, 1899 at Schwenksville, Pa. He married Eva Viola Renninger of Pennsburg, Pa., on June 18, 1924. This union was blessed with one daughter, Emma Jane.

He received his elementary, and high school education at Schwenksville, Pa., and later attended the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Episcopal Church at Philadelphia, Pa., from 1923-27. Besides having served as clerk in different stores, he also served as ticket clerk with the Reading Railroad at Landsdale, Pa.



REV. HOWARD G. NYCE, D. D., MRS. NYCE AND DAUGHTER JANE

From 1924-29 Rev. Nyce was Pastor of the East Swamp Mennonite Church at Quakertown, Pa., and then served as Pastor of both the Allentown and Upper Milford Mennonite Churches from 1929-48, after which he resigned to take up the pastorate of the First Mennonite Church at Pretty Prairie, Kansas, which church he is still serving since September 1, 1948.

Besides serving these various churches he was also a member of Eastern District Historical Committee from 1928-31; Vice President of the Eastern District Conference from 1930-31, 1932-33; 1944-45; and President of the same Conference from 1931-32, 1946-48. He also served as Secretary of the Home Mission Committee of the Eastern District Conference from 1930-38. He was a member of the Pennsylvania Council of Churches Comity Committee from 1933-38; of the Foreign Mission Board of the General Conference of Mennonite of North America from 1935-51; a member of Eastern District Conference Educational Committee from 1933-36; and also President of the Board of Directors of Friends of Israel of Allentown from 1935-48, besides having been Secretary of the Eastern District Conference from 1938-43; and President of the Ministers League of Allentown and vicinity from 1939-40 and of the Allentown Christian Fundamentalist Fellowship from 1940-1943. He also served as Executive Secretary of the General Conference Mission Board of the Mennonite Church of North America.

Rev. Nyce received his D. D. degree in 1948 from the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Episcopal Church at Philadelphia, Pa.

Since Dr. Nyce has been Pastor here, there have been 66 weddings, of which 19 were not in our church; and there were 34 deaths, Dr. Nyce having been absent from 6 of these funerals. He also baptized 88 young people, and received 43 by Letter or Right-hand-of-Fellowship, and has consecrated 97 children.

Since Dr. Nyce has been in the ministry he officiated at 180 funerals and assisted at 72; he conducted or officiated at 146 weddings; consecrated 229 children; baptized 252 people and received 216 by Letter or Right-hand-of-Fellowship. He has delivered 3,668 messages to date (Sept. 23, 1954), of which number about 300 were addresses delivered on special occasions.

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### 4. BACKGROUND OF THE PRETTY PRAIRIE MENNONITES

Our earliest records place the cradle of our forebearers in Canton Berne, Switzerland, and our religious background is found in the Anabaptist of the reformation period. Those familiar with the Anabaptists and their affiliates will remember that they

were a deeply religious people with their stronghold in Switzerland. These Anabaptists were later called Mennonites after Menno Simons, our early leader. To them their religious freedom was their most valuable possession, which however was often refused them. After many years of exceptional bitter persecution in Switzerland these Martyrs of faith sought refuge in other countries; therefore we find groups left their alpine homes at various times for other places.

The frequent migration of these ancestral groups and others of the same faith was usually prompted by a desire for freedom of worship, as well as attractive offers made them by different rulers who guaranteed them freedom, if only these industrial people would settle within their domain.

In the old country the people lived in villages exclusively, and the following chronological outline gives us a brief history of their migration.

In 1671 a large group left for the Palatinate (Rhine Phalz) where religious freedom was offered them. Among these were some of our ancestors, as Jost Krehbiel common ancestor of all Krehbiels living in this community, who first settled at Primmerhof, and about the same time another group settled at Montbeliard, Elsass, France.

In 1791 Moses Goering, Johann Graber, Johann Lichti, Peter Kaufman, Elizabeth Graber and Anna Roth, all of Swiss nationality, secured a passport to leave Montbeliard, France. All subsequent families by these names are descendents of them. These left France because of the French revolution as well as because of the invitation given to the Mennonites in 1786 by Katherine Czarine of Russia. However, reaching Ensiedel, Austria, they decided to remain there, as a colony from the Palatinate already was settled there. Family names here were Miller, Mundelheim, Krehbiel, Zerger and Schrag. In 1797 they moved to Michalsdorf near Warsaw, Poland. Represented here were Mundelheim, Stucky, Graber, Albrecht, Flickinger, Goering, Kaufman, Schrag, Ratzlaff, Rupp, Roth, Voran, Sutter and Zuck. In 1817 this group moved to Edwardsdorf near Dubno, Wolynia. Wolynia is a Polish province of about 240 by 120 miles. It joins Austria with Shitomer as the Capitol, and at that time under Russian rule. Family names here were Albrecht, Goering, Stucky, Miller, Schrag, Zerger, Waltner, Wedel, Ries, Preheim and Strausz.

In 1837 the Horodish and Waldheim colonies were founded by the Michalsdorf group near Edwardsdorf. Here were Grabers, Kaufmans, Schrags, Goerings, Millers, Schwartz and possibly others.

The Edwardsdorf colony was dissolved in 1860 and the Kotosufka colony was founded. The real estate of the Kotosufka and Waldheim colonies was owned, while all former villages were rented property. Here represented were Stuckys, Goerings, Albrechts, Flickingers, Dirks, Krehbiels, Waltners, Wedels, Ortman, Schrags, Zergers, Vorans and possibly others.

By this time the 100-year privilege granted by Katherine Czarine II of Russia had expired and Czar Alexander refused to renew it. So in 1873 a deputation of Mennonites from the Ukraine and Crimea were sent to North America, and the Swiss-Wolynians joined them by sending Andreas Schrag. This group was sent primarily to study conditions and locations in the new world in view of making a settlement here, leaving in April and returning in September of the same year. And upon hearing their report the immediate unanimous reaction was, "We are going to America!"

After our ancestors had fully decided to leave Russia, John Waltner and Peter Goering (Schlosser) were commissioned to noise it about that there were several whole villages being offered for sale in Wolynian, namely Waldheim and Kotosufka in which the real estate, livestock and personal property were to be sold, while in Horodisch only the buildings, furniture and livestock were for sale and the land was to be rented, as the poorer people lived here and didn't own any land. So Waltner and Goering drove into the Lutheran community as far as Bohemia, and advertised these villages, and as a result buyers came, though mostly Lutherans, and everyone was able to sell, even though some had to sell at sacrificial prices.

In Russia, among our people, an average farmer had from 2 to 5 head of cattle although there were some who milked 14 cows. And where they owned the land an average farmer had 1, 2 or 3 huves of land, while some had only half a huve. A huve is 50 acres. Going wages for a man servant then were 12 rubles, and for a maid servant from 4 to 6 rubles per year.

So in 1874 the Kotosufka, Horodisch and Waldheim colonies dissolved and migrated to America, settling in South Dakota and McPherson County, Kansas. The Dakota group left the Wolynian province in early summer. The first of these groups consisted of Andreas Schrag and 10 families, with 53 more families following shortly after. These came from Horodisch, Gorret and Futter to the depot Slovuti, crossing Brodda and Lemberg, Austria to Hamburg, and by boat to Hull, and to Liverpool by train, embarking the Inman liner and sailing to New York. Then through Buffalo, Chicago and Sioux City by special immigrant train, reaching Yankton, South. Dakota, in August, 1874. These two groups settled about 35 miles north of



Yankton of what is now Freeman, and Marion, South Dakota. Here were Albrights, Flickingers, Goerings, Grabers, Kaufmans, Mullers, Preheims, Ries, Schrag, Senners, Stuckys, Schwartzs, Waltners, Krehbiels and possibly others.

The last and largest groups left Kotosufka, Wolynian, Russia August 6, 1874, comprising 73 families in a 2-day trek to Stolbonow, the nearest railway point to Hamburg, then by boat to Hull, and from there to Liverpool by train, and on the liner "City of Richmond" from Liverpool to New York. At Castle Garden, New York, while on a few days stop, they were induced by the Santa Fe agent C. B. Schmidt and others to change their planned destination from South Dakota to Peabody, Kansas; thus settling in McPherson County around the vicinity of Moundridge in September, 1874. Families represented here were Albrights, Flickingers, Goerings, Kaufmans, Schrag, Stuckys, Waltners, Grabers, Wedels, Zergers, Strauszs, Vorans, etc.

In 1884 a part of the South Dakota group came to Reno County where they were joined by some McPherson County families, settling in Albion Township. This group consisted of about 30 families of Zergers, Vogts, Stuckys, Schwartzs, Schroeders, Senners, Preheims, Krehbiels, Koppers, Kaufmans, Grabers, Flickingers, Goerings and Albrechts with more coming from time to time.

When Jacob Amen (founder of the Amish) gathered his followers in Alsace, France, and the Palatinate, it seems that our forefathers leaned to his teachings as evidenced by their signatures endorsing the statements of beliefs and practices written and signed at Essingen, Germany in 1779. A copy of this statement with the signatures of Joseph Schrag, Hans Albrecht, Christian Graber, Christian Stucky, Johannes Flickinger, Joseph Mundelheim, Christian Albrecht, Christian Sutter and Johann Maurer was brought over in 1874.

How long they adhered to these conservative practices is not known. It seems that in America they rapidly discontinued them, as they soon joined the Mennonite General Conference chartered by John Oberholzer and others which Webster terms as the most progressive branch of Mennonites.

Names traced back to their origin, or as far as traceable.

Swiss Mennonite

1. Albright
2. Graber
3. Goering
4. Flickinger
5. Kaufman
6. Krehbiel
7. Muller
8. Schrag
9. Stucky
10. Sutter

Names not perpetual in our Community

1. Archelous
2. Gordie
3. Hubin
4. Heitinger
5. Mendelheim
6. Maurer
7. Roth
8. Rupp
9. Wolbert
10. Zuck

Preheim .....).  
 )... joined in Poland from Lutherans,  
 Ries ..... )

Senner ..... )  
 )... joined in Bavaria from Lutherans,  
 Strausz ..... )

Soft ..... )  
 )...joined in Poland from Mennonites  
 Ortman ..... )

Voran ..... joined in Poland

Schwartz .....	joined in Bavaria from Mennonites
Zerger .....	Elsace Mennonites
Wedel .....	Schliesian Low German Mennonites
Waltner .....	Hutterite Mennonites

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## 5. SEEKING A NEW FRONTIER

In the spring of 1884, after having been in America about 10 years, some of our people with limited means from the mother communities of, Freeman, South Dakota and McPherson County, Kansas, felt a need for a new settlement and church somewhere on the open prairie of Kansas where land was cheaper. In quest for a suitable location, 4 young men, namely Peter W. Kaufman, John Stucky, John Senner and Jacob Preheim ventured out to look over Reno, Kingman, Harper and Pratt Counties centering their choice on this area in Reno County. Soon after they returned, another group, consisting of Jacob Wedel, Andrew Goering, Peter Goering and Christian D. Krehbiel inspected and approved this locality in Albion and adjoining townships.

The Santa Fe railroad, then owned every alternate section of land here, their agents, Brown and Bigger, showed this land to a group of prospects from S. Dakota and McPherson County of about 50 people at one time. 22 surreys and buggies were used to transport this group from Hutchinson to and from this land. The price then being \$6.00 an acre for raw land and \$7.00 an acre for fenced prairie. This met with their approval and they reserved and later purchased 9 sections, thus availing themselves of the Brown and Bigger offer to give \$50.00 for church purposes this specified amount of land was bought. Only 5 of this group bought 2 quarters each, all others 160 acres each, except for a few which bought only 80 acres. Some of these being improved homesteads. So by October 10, 1884, when this church was organized, 30 families were already here with more coming from time to time.

The following is a list of these families that came from South Dakota and McPherson County, Kansas in 1884 with the trek continuing through 1885. This list has been compiled as near correct as could be established by the information that was available.

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### Coming from S. Dakota 1884-1885

Mrs. Mary Graber	Joseph Kaufman
John B. Graber	Andrew Schwartz
Christian Graber	Solomon Schwartz
Peter A. Graber	Jacob Schwartz, Sr.
Joseph C. Graber	Jacob J. Schwartz
Jacob K. Graber	Mrs. Lizzie Stucky
John J. Graber	Jacob J. Stucky
Joseph Graber, Sr.	John Stucky
Jacob J. Graber	Joseph Stucky
Peter R. Graber	Peter J. Stucky
Joseph G. Graber	Jacob Flickinger, Sr.
Peter D. Graber	Jacob J. Flickinger
Andrew Goering	Rev. J. J. Flickinger
Jacob Goering, Sr.	Carl Preheim
Daniel Goering	Jacob Preheim
Jacob Krehbiel	Peter Preheim
Daniel Krehbiel	Jacob Senner, Sr.
Christian D. Krehbiel	John Senner
Jacob Albright	Peter Senner
Andrew Albright	Joseph Zerger, Sr.
John Albright	Joseph J. Zerger
Mrs. Magdeline Kaufman	John Vogt
Peter Kaufman	

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### Coming from McPherson

#### County 1884-1885

Jacob Kaufman
Peter W. Kaufman
Peter P. Stucky
Christian Stucky
John C. Graber
Peter Graber
Joseph P. Graber
Carl Graber
John Goering
John Flickner
Peter Kopper
Joseph Albrecht
Joab Schmitt
Cornelius Schroeder
David Schroeder
Ernest Wenzel

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### Coming later than 1885

John G. Graber	S.D.	1886	Zacharias Goering	M. Co.	1902
Peter O. Graber	S.D.	1891	Henry Ratzlaff	M. Co.	1904
Mrs. Peter Graber	S.D.	1891	Jonathan R. Goering	M. Co.	1904
John C. Kaufman	M. Co.	1888	Ben W Goering	M. Co.	1905



Christian M. Albright	M. Co.	1892	Peter A. Stucky	S.D.	1907
John C. Schwartz	M. Co.	1892	Joseph P. Stucky	Okla.	1909
Jacob Krehbiel	M. Co.	1892	Mrs. Frances Zerger	Okla.	1910
John R. Krehbiel	M. Co.	1892	Ben Wedel	Cal.	1910
Jacob Waltner	M. Co.	1892	Joseph Preheim	K. Co.	1912
Peter J. Waltner	M. Co.	1892	Carl Voran	K. Co.	1912
Joseph N. Waltner	M. Co.	1892	Paul Voran	K. Co.	1912
Christian W. Albright	M. Co.	1892	Lawrence Voran	K. Co.	1912
Ben J. Flickner	M. Co.	1892	Albert Huxman	M. Co.	1915
John Waltner	M. Co.	1893	David Flickner	S. D.	1918
Joseph Schrag	M. Co.	1896	Joseph J. Kaufman	M. Co.	1917
John Schrag	M. Co.	1899	Andrew J. Stucky	M. Co.	1918
Ben Unruh	M. Co.	1989	Andrew G. Schrag	M. Co.	1918
John Graber	M. Co.	1895	Peter P. Schrag	M. Co.	1925
John D. Graber	M. Co.	1902	Rudalph J. Stucky	M. Co.	1820
Peter D. Graber	K. Co.	1899	Henman Winsinger	M. Co.	1921
John Goering	K. Co.	1899	Henry Ruebke	Germany	1923
Mrs. Lizzie Kaufman Vogt	K. Co.	1899	Edwin Goering	M. Co.	1942
Wm. Soft	S. D.	1899	Howard Schrag	S. D.	1942
Jacob H. Goering	M. Co.	1902	B. J. Stucky	M. Co.	1916

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## 6. THE MENNONITE BOARD OF GUARDIANS

Members of this Board of Guardians were: Christian Krehbiel, President; David Goertz, Secretary; John F. Funk, Treasurer; Bernard Warkentin was agent, and Daniel Bear and Isaac Kilmer were also members. This relief organization was something like the M. C. C. of our day.

As Andreas Schrag, the Swiss delegate was on his tour inspecting America, told this Mennonite Board of Guardians here that some \$6,000.00 to \$8,000.00 would be needed to bring our people across since many had insufficient funds to make this trip. Thanks to this Relief Agency who helped pay the railroad and steamship fare. Some of this money was donated, but most of it was advanced on a loan basis to be repaid. A few families, but mostly young unmarried men stayed in the eastern states for hire to pay off their transportation debt, among them were some of our pioneer church leaders.

The first year in S. Dakota, where many of our ancestors later came from, many families were destitute with no funds for planting any crops on the bleak prairies, so Andreas Schrag and Joseph Kaufman went to the eastern states to plead for help, and by making themselves responsible succeeded in getting \$7,400.00 of which \$100.00 was allotted to a family on interest bearing notes that were later repaid. We can see by these conditions that many of our forefathers that came with but a staff and a willingness to work could never have come across to the "Land of Opportunities" except by the generosity of these Mennonites of the eastern states as the Old Mennonites, Amish etc., which were already well established, having come long before our group.

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## 7. SECURING THE PASSPORT

Every family was required to get a passport in order to cross the Russian border unmolested, but because of the mass migration in 1874 the Russian Government was reluctant to grant these papers as there were about 6400 Mennonite families which left Russia in about one year. The committee made responsible to get these passports were Jacob Wedel, Andrew Goering and Julius Foss. As there were delays in this matter because our people in Russia were not naturalized citizens, a lawyer named Illisiawich, was hired. He demanded a petition setting forth authentication of identity, date of entering Russia, purpose of same, the privileges they enjoyed there, their religious faith and the reasons they wanted to leave there, as well as the name and place of residence of everyone wishing to leave Russia. This petition finally was prepared which took considerable documentation, affidavits and other proofs, but the Russian Government took advantage of the situation and charged 50 rubles for the passport for each family.

To defray the expenses incurred in obtaining this evidence and the legal services of their lawyer Illisiawich, the

Horodish colonists had to take 500 rubles to Kotosufka, a distance of about 50 miles which was a very dangerous undertaking. Andrew Schwartz, father of Peter A., Ben A. and, Jonas H. was one of the founders of this church finally volunteered to undertake this trip. He dressed in patched, shabby clothes with staff in hand and the money in his pocket, started on this two-day journey, staying overnight in a Jew's roadhouse where he had asked for special bed arrangements. Arriving at his destination the next day, he delivered the money and started back home the following day, again lodging at the same roadhouse. Before leaving the following morning he told his host the story of having 500 rubles on his person the night before when lodging there, which really startled the Jew. This heroic deed had been praised by many who knew of it and it still bears repeating.

When the notice finally came from Jhitomir in the spring of 1874 that the passports were ready the colonists began to dispose of their property. The Waldheim and Kotosufka colonists, which came about one month later than the Horodish, sold their land, as they were landowners and also had livestock, with few exceptions, which gave them funds for transportation and to build a home as they settled in McPherson County, Kansas. A few of these families came to America with up to \$4,400.00, while the Horodish colonists were all renters and hired servants. Only to the extent of their furniture, buildings and livestock did they have anything to cash in on. The livestock then had a fare price, but with too many sellers and too few buyers things sold very cheap. The servants in Russia were shamefully underpaid. A girl servant was paid as little as 4 rubles per year; consequently many families had insufficient funds to make this trip, as most of these families were large. The adult ticket was \$80.00 per person and the passport \$50.00 per family. And in the monetary exchange in New York 73 cents per ruble was received. It is amazing how God made it possible that the poor as well as the rich were able to cross the ocean to America in the interest of military and religious freedom.

(The author of this book still has his grandfather's passport, which is printed in the Russian, German and French languages. Several sheets are torn off on perforated lines. It was issued at Jhitomir, and was signed and stamped by Rosenberg on June 20, 1874. On it are the names of Jacob and Elizabeth Stucky with the names of each of their children, and the signature of Jacob Stucky.)

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### **8. REV J. J. FLICKINGER'S ADDRESS GIVEN AT FREEMAN, S. DAKOTA, August 1924**

(In commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the immigration of our Mennonites from Russia). Translated by J. A. Stucky, 1953.

"Serve the Lord with gladness!" My dear listeners, I deem it a privilege to be with you today. May we together praise the Lord for what He has done. I am deeply grateful to God that He has made it possible for me to be able to be with you. My coming here is not that I have anything new to bring you, or of any great knowledge that I may possess for I am one of you, even an old settler, and want to very modestly review with you the past.

The Psalmist exclaimed, "Oh, give thanks unto the Lord for He is good and His mercy endureth forever." This means that all of us should praise the Lord for His goodness endureth forever.

The house of Aaron saith, "Everyone should praise the Lord." Certainly this is the day that the Lord hath made, let us rejoice and be glad in it. It is with joyful heart that we celebrate this Jubilee, because it means so much to us. Our hearts are filled with praise for all the things that the Lord our God has done for our forefathers and for us unto this present day, and we want to join with the Psalmist in saying, "Praise the Lord with all that we possess. The Old Testament exhorts us that all should celebrate the festivities with joyful hearts. We have reason to say with the Apostle Paul, "Rejoice in the Lord my beloved brethren." In Gen. 32:10 we read the words of Jacob on his journey homeward to the land of his fathers at God's bidding, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which thou hast shewed thy servant." But by going back 20 years we find Jacob fleeing from his brother Esau from whom he obtained the birthright. Tired from a strenuous day Jacob laid down under heaven's canopy with a stone for a pillow. Here God revealed himself to him promising him the land whereon he slept, and that through his seed all kindred of the earth shall be blessed. When Jacob awoke he took the stone whereon he slept and poured oil on it and called the place Bethel. Then while pursuing his journey it seems Jacob had forgotten his higher calling, but his possessions increased from year to year, until God in His mercy reminded him of his vow and told him to return to the land of his fathers after settling the dispute with Laban, his father-in-law, with a peaceful covenant.

Now he was on his way back when he was told his brother Esau was coming to meet him with an army of 400 men. Here Jacob realized his unworthiness before God and divided his herds, flocks and people into two bands to save at least one company. And as he was battling within himself, being conscience stricken of the wrong he had done to Esau and not knowing which way to turn, he turned to God pleading for help and protection to meet his brother. In order to appease his brother he sent gifts from



his herds ahead, himself staying behind. When they reached the brook Jabbock, he had conscience pangs. The Scripture says a man wrestled with him all night, and as a result Jacob's thigh was out of joint, and he received the asked blessing. This gave him courage to meet his brother, and how wonderful God had led the reconciliation between these two brothers. Esau whom Jacob feared embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they both wept. Instead of hatred and bitterness there was forgiveness.

Now let us return in our thinking to the time when our forefathers received the instruction from God to leave Russia. What difficult obstacles they had to overcome when it became known that Alexander II refused to renew the edict as Jacob Stucky and Tobias Unruh had conferred with the Russian Government without avail, which created a great stir and confusion as the different colonists ran from one colony to another, planning and praying which way to turn. What disappointments and perplexities, as decisions were being made to leave what was home to them. It was a grave situation to be met with this question of faith and conscience which confronted our forefathers and which they were very serious! Considering, because this manifesto which granted them military freedom was revoked, and although it was modified to a certain extent it was never again fully granted.

In seeking a new frontier 12 men were delegated to inspect the country and people of America, as in Biblical times, namely Wm. Ewert, Tobias Buller, Tobias Unruh, Andreas Schrag, Jacob Peters, Henry Wiebe, Cornelius Bour, Cornelius Toews, David Klassen, Paul Tschetter, Leonard Tschetter and Leonard Suderman. America seemed at that time extremely far away. I sometimes think it is about as easy to take a trip to the moon today as it was to come to America at that time. And 50 years ago we had very little knowledge of geography, and our forefathers deep in Russia had no idea where America was. But in spite of it all these men were sent to this unknown country. Their starting on this journey was viewed with mingled feelings as though they were going into certain death, but they all came back unhurt having investigated Kansas, Nebraska, S. Dakota and Minnesota, and as their report was favorable everyone with one accord said, "We're going to America."

The future began to look brighter, but certain griefs could not be hidden because the wealthier ones could well undertake this move and establish themselves a home in the new land, but what about those without means. This received serious consideration as the thought of having to serve in the army haunted them, so in order to solve this perplexing situation it was decided to have a day of prayer. Everyone was present in church and their petition was brought before the Lord in fervent prayer. This hour of prayer left an indelible impression on us which I shall never forget to my dying days. The poor as well as the rich were to sail and the date was set, but many difficulties were still to be overcome in the preparation and disposing of our property. The main worry being the selling of the land, as everyone wanted to realize as much as possible from his belongings. Some thought if they could get beyond the Russian border, as that is as far as their money would go, thinking they would somehow beg their way further, but no one had to stay behind as God was a wonderful provider putting us to shame who mistrusted His mighty strength. We safely journeyed through Germany and across the ocean, landing at our destination in Yankton, S. Dakota. There was no modern transportation at Yankton, S. Dakota, then. I remember walking this long stretch with an elderly man. So with but a staff in hand we left our home overseas to come to America. Now we have become two bands in size and strength, and have become comparatively wealthy.

Dear brethren, let us face the question. What do we owe God? O give thanks unto the Lord! Open your eyes and look about you and behold what God has done for us in the last 50 years: everywhere growing fields of grain and bearing orchards. Fruitfulness all around us where before were the wide open prairies.

Dear young brethren, we oldsters have witnessed the migration from Russia. This fact will be commemorated for centuries to come and should have honorable mention among the Mennonites continually. We again remind you that the goodness of God hath overwhelmed us today. Our ancestors were not privileged to receive educational training and did not grasp the full extent of their holy calling that in the regions beyond nations should be blessed through them. Here in America as well as in the dark regions of Africa and in many other parts of the globe the power of the gospel and His Kingdom are being made known by our Mennonite missionaries.

Without earthly possessions many of our brethren had to leave Russia to avoid having to take-up arms, and to sustain the faith of our fathers that the doctrine of nonresistance be better established. And today, when we survey the conditions and status of our people over the past 50 years, we can also say we have become two bands prepared to the glory of God. Through others we were brought to God, so let us praise God throughout eternity. Bearing in mind that through land and sea we came making great sacrifices and enduring many trials and hardships. Nevertheless we became two bands and can proclaim to the heathen the gospel of the glory of God. Let us praise God for His mercy and faithfulness to this day. Take another look about you, and acknowledge the fruitfulness and prosperity God has bestowed upon us. All this comes from the hand of God. May God's grace continue to abide with you, and the ground-work which the pioneers began now be shouldered and carried on by the younger generation. The Lord is great and His mercy endureth forever!

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## 9. SHORT REPORT OF THE ORGANIZING AND PROGRESS OF THE PRETTY PRAIRIE MENNONITE CHURCH

(Given by Rev. J. J. Flickinger October 14, 1934 at the 50th Jubilee of the  
First Mennonite Church of Pretty Prairie, Kansas)

Translated from the German by J. A. Stucky, 1953

Since it was assigned to me to report in 20 minutes of the organization and development of the Pretty Prairie Church, such report I will try to give as concise as possible. Since our early church book was destroyed by fire, I will have to draw mostly on my memory as there is very little in writing to draw on, except for a few events of importance I had jotted down in my notebook.

In 1874 when our people migrated from Russia, some of them settled in S. Dakota and some of them in Kansas; thus organizing two large congregations, the Salem in Freeman, S. Dakota and the Hopefield by Moundridge, Kansas. After 10 years of pioneering in S. Dakota, we left, because of the long severe winter, for the good, cheap land and milder climate of Kansas. A group of 12 men decided to go and see the land in this locality in January, 1884, with some people from McPherson County joining us in inspecting this area near Pretty Prairie, Kansas. Already there was an inland post office here. It suited all of us and we began to dicker with the Atchison Topeka and Santa Fe Railroad Co., who owned this land. If I remember correctly we bought from their agents Brown and Bigger 9 sections prairie land at \$6.00 and \$7.00 per acre which was subdivided by lot. Some being improved homesteads which were bought at various prices according to improvements. Soon after we returned home, preparations were made for moving which was done the same spring. Jacob K. Graber, Joseph Zerger, Jacob Stucky, Joseph Stucky, John Stucky, John Albright, Jacob Preheim and John Senner were the first ones to settle here, with others following as soon as they could sell out there. Thus there were a few coming practically every month the first summer.

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### Electing a Leader

When I came in September, 1884, there were already quite a few living here, both from the S. Dakota and the Moundridge communities. They already had a Sunday school organized here, and were meeting in the Andrew Schwartz home. Jacob Kaufman and Jacob J. Graber were their leaders. In the absence of a preacher the leader read a portion of scripture after the Sunday school, and after a short meditation closed with prayer. Then they began to consider seriously how and when they might select a minister. They soon had a business meeting and resolved to call Elder Jacob Stucky, and after consulting with him decided to have an election on October 10 to elect two evangelists on probation for one year, and then to be ordained. Every one receiving votes should choose by lot. In this drawing each one would draw a blank except one. So a prayer meeting was held to ask that the Lord might lead and direct in this drawing that everything might terminate according to His holy will and to the welfare of this church. After the prayer meeting the drawing by lot was held in the home of Andrew Schwartz, and the result was that all 21 that had received votes drew blanks except myself (Rev. J. J. Flickinger). So at the next conference session we were received into the conference as the Mennonite Church of Pretty Prairie, Kansas, with 30 families and 88 members, and we were given the prescribed amount of conference votes. Of those families and members a few family couples and a number of members still remain.

Just what this development might mean to include, whether the outer or membership growth, or the inner or spiritual growth, I will endeavor to give in short my view of its development.

In 1887 another election was held in which John G. Graber was elected as assistant pastor, and Peter A. Graber as deacon. Both were ordained. My ordination took place 8 months after my election on June 28, 1885, and 4 years later, on April 5, 1889, I was ordained as Elder by Elder Jacob Stucky.

The church meetings were held the first winter at the Andrew Schwartz home and later at the John B. Graber home. Since the church membership increased steadily more room was needed. In the fall of 1885 a store building was bought at Cheney, Kansas, for \$80.00 and moved to the present site. This building was remodeled into a meeting house which served this purpose four years. The church membership increased from 88 to 212 members the congregation decided to build a new and larger church building, which was destroyed by a tornado in 1897. By that time the families had increased to 96 and the membership to 270, and as land was going up in price, some families were seeking cheaper land. A group moved to Oklahoma and organized a church there. Later some moved to Kingman County, where the Bethany Church was organized, while others went to Monroe, Washington, and organized a church there.

Those of us that remained here rebuilt the church on the same foundation, which served our congregation until May 5, 1905, when a fire of unknown origin completely destroyed this structure. This building had already been crowded; a new and

larger one was built which served for 22 years. But with the membership still growing and after much deliberation it was decided to dismantle this building and build a new large brick edifice. On February 6, 1927 the last services were held, and on February 7 the tearing down had commenced, and on February 5, 1928, one day less than one year later the present brick structure was completed and dedicated to the service and glory of God, and may it ever serve that purpose. I believe that the blessings of God were with us in the building of the different church structures and in other material ways as the Lord had graciously protected us from any mishap.

Much can be said, if time permitted, about the development of our church in the spiritual realm in the last 50 years. I will briefly touch on a few points. First, the Mission Activity. Today the missionary project receives greater support from this church and we have a deeper sense of responsibility in spreading the Kingdom of God among the heathen than was the case 50 years ago, as many more offerings are being taken annually. Yes, the work of the kingdom in all its branches—both home and foreign is remembered more in prayer and gift than was the case previously. I will also mention the activity of the different auxiliaries as the Sewing Society and the Christian Endeavor. Also our devotional meetings, as the prayer meetings, revival meetings, Sunday school and song practice. All these and more could be counted as progress that were not developed 50 years ago.

We sometimes hear that people have come to the point of losing their faith, not letting the Holy Spirit convict and lead them, being high minded and loving pleasure more than God. However, there are many that are sure of their personal salvation and can testify to the glory of God and who praise their Redeemer, perhaps more than there were in the early days. Many today declare, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." More points could be cited of spiritual progress, and still there is much room for improvement.

Of the ministers serving this church, I served since 1884. Rev. John G. Graber since 1886 and Peter A. Graber since 1886. In 1914 the three of us decided that this church needed younger and better educated ministers, and especially such that could serve in the English language. So all three of us handed in our resignation the same day, giving the church a chance to seek another minister. So until the congregation could reach an agreement in the effort of getting another minister, arrangements were made with the former ministers to serve three more years. In 1917 the three years had run their course and brother Graber had passed away after serving this church 30 years, then the congregation asked me to keep on serving until another minister could be called to take charge. In 1919 Rev. J. B. Epp accepted and my services were ended after 35 years. Rev. J. B. Epp served his term of two years from May 1, 1919 to September 1921; Rev. N. W. Bahnmann than served from 1921 to 1925; Rev. J. W. Lorenz served from 1925 to 1932; and Rev. S. M. Musselman is serving since 1932. God reward their faithfulness according to His mercy.

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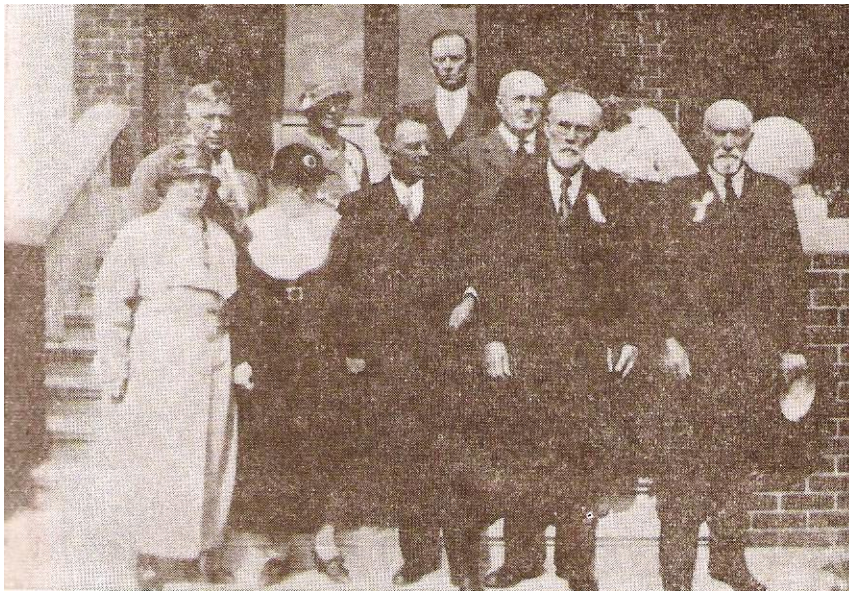
## **10. FIVE CHURCH BUILDINGS SERVED PRETTY PRAIRIE CONGREGATION DURING 70 YEAR HISTORY**

The Pretty Prairie Mennonite Church was organized in the pioneer year of 1884. A store building was bought for \$80.00 at Cheney, Kansas and moved to the present site. It was remodeled and used as a house of worship until 1891, when it was sold and a new building erected. This was a frame structure 32' x 48' with balcony above south entrance, and with arched ceiling.

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### **Tornado of 1897**

This edifice served the congregation for about six years, when on the evening of April 22, 1897, after a warm, sultry day a heavy cloud came from the southwest. It formed into a funnel south of Pretty Prairie, dipped down and took into its path the Tom Collingwood farm, then the W. H. Seyb place, doing some damage to the barn. Then as it took a northeasterly course striking the Jim Frey place, where Victor Graber now lives, wrecking a number of farm buildings there.



**MINISTERS AND THEIR WIVES AT 50TH ANNIVERSARY, 1934**

From here it took its course to the Mennonite church, raising it from its foundation, forcing the northeast corner into the ground and completely demolishing it. The debris was scattered east and northeast several hundred feet. The heavy iron rod with turnbuckle, which was strung across the top of the church building, to keep the sides from spreading, was badly curled and twisted, and most of the oak benches were broken and splintered.

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#### **Schoolhouse Demolished**

From here the twister proceeded to the Andrew Schwartz' place, now owned by Jonas Schwartz, damaging the house and other buildings, taking in its path the Spring Vale schoolhouse, where John P. O. Graber had conducted Daily Vacation Bible school that day. It completely demolished this building, so that only the wreckage was found when the pupils came to school the next morning.

The farm buildings directly across the road east of this schoolhouse belonging to Ed Cogswell were also damaged, as well as trees blown over and uprooted at the Schwartz and Cogswell places. Here the tornado, after having spent its fury, rose up and subsided with no one seriously hurt.

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#### **Rebuilt on Same foundation**

The church received insurance and the building was rebuilt the same year on the same foundation, and after the same model. The schoolhouse was also rebuilt. This church building was dedicated and served our congregation until May 5, 1905, when that night disaster struck again, and it burned to the ground with all its contents by fire of unknown origin. It was suspected at that time, the blaze was lit by someone intentionally, as the church ladder could not be found at its usual place, and was later found in a nearby wheat field during harvest. The supposition was that the ladder was in some way used to light the blaze and then hid in the nearby grain.

Those were the horse and buggy days with few telephones, and as this sanctuary was destroyed on Friday, many people did not know of it until they came to worship Sunday morning.

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#### **Decide to Build Again**

A business meeting was then immediately called and the congregation decided to build again, this time a larger sanctuary, 26' x 56' with an east entrance. A temporary tabernacle was first erected, which served as a house of worship until the church building was completed. After it had served the congregation for 22 years, it was decided that a larger and more modern church must be erected. So the old building was dismantled, and in about a year, or on February 5, 1928, this new brick edifice was dedicated, which has a seating capacity for about 1,200 people, and which is still being used.

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#### **Recent Improvements**

In recent years an acoustic system, and indoor rest rooms have been added, and the church building has been redecorated inside as well as outside. On October 28, 1951, the new Wick electric pipe organ was dedicated. It's being used to the glory of God



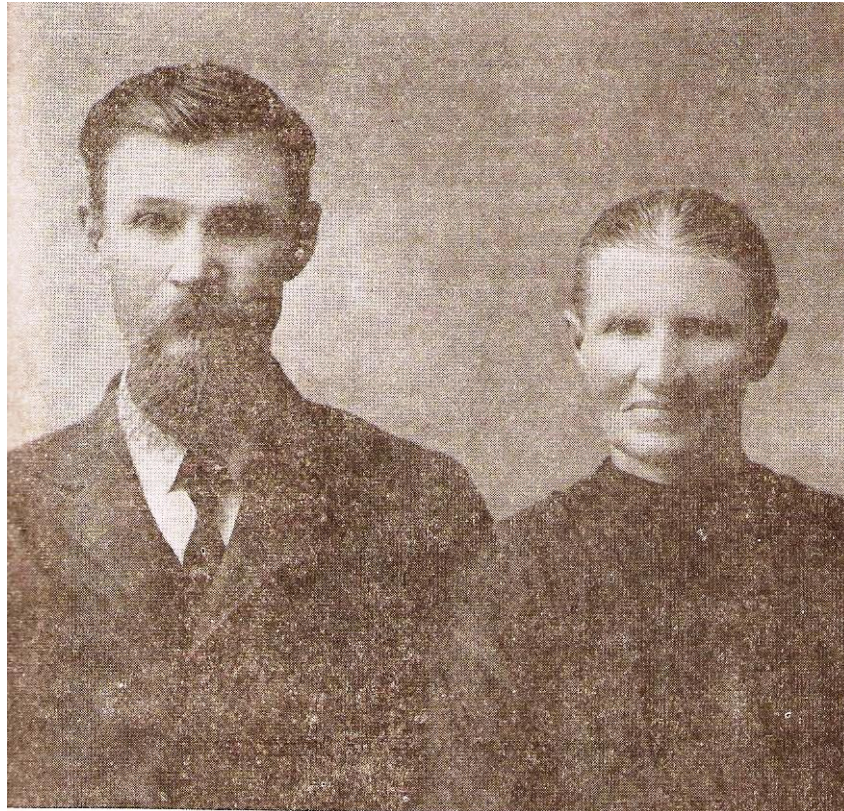
by greatly aiding the worship service, as well as adding to its reverence.

The rebuilding after such catastrophes proves the necessity of a meeting house; but also that the church consists not primarily in its edifice, but in its living members.

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### 11. LIFE STORY OF REV. J. J. FLICKINGER

Rev. John J. Flickinger son of Jacob and Barbara Graber Flickinger was born at Horodish, Russia, on January 1, 1857. He came to Kotoaufka with his parents in 1860 where he attended village school. He was instructed and baptized by Elder Jacob Stucky April 9, 1872, and came to America with his parents in 1874 settling at Marion, South Dakota. It was here, he was converted while attending Evangelical meetings.



REV. AND MRS. JOHN J FLICKINGER, PIONEER MINISTER

On October 28, 1879 he was joined in holy wedlock with Marie Senner, daughter of Jacob and Barbara Graber Senner. To this union 8 children were born, namely Anna, Mrs. Andrew A. Stucky; Lena, Mrs. Frank Wall; Caroline, Mrs. Henry Flickner; Emil; Emma, Mrs. Peter H. Graber; Elizabeth, Mrs. Henry Block; Bertha, Mrs. Otto Unruh, and Amos.

In 1884 he and his family with 30 other families came to Kansas, where they organized the Pretty Prairie Mennonite Church; he being one of its charter members. He was chosen leader on October 10, 1884, and was ordained as minister on June 28, 1885, by Elder Jacob Stucky from the Hopefield Church. After six years on April 5, 1891, he was ordained as Elder by the Elders Jacob Stucky and Christian Kaufman, in which capacity he served from 1884 to 1919.

Rev. Flickinger was a very talented man with fluent delivery, considering his lack of education. He was well poised and progressive for those days. He taught daily vocational Bible school in the old church, and was a member of the Board of Trustees of the General Conference in 1908. During his 35 years of serving this church he baptized some, 300 members, and united into Holy Matrimony 80 couples, besides having spoken words of comfort to many bereaved and mourning ones. He died on February 23, 1942, at the age of 85 years, after a short illness.

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## 12. LIFE STORY OF REV. John G. GRABER



REV. JOHN G. GRABER ASSISTANT PIONEER MINISTER

Rev. John G. Graber, son of John and Christina Strausz Graber, was born on February 26, 1846, at Horodish, Wolynia, Russia. While still in Russia, he was married to Mary Sutter, daughter of Christian and Anna Schwartz Sutter. To this union 2 children were born, Anna, Mrs. Jacob Albrecht, deceased, who was born in Russia, and Jacob G. born in South Dakota.

Rev. Graber came to America, with his family, during the mass immigration in 1874, settling in South Dakota, where he was converted while attending evangelical meetings, and where he later served as Sunday school superintendent.

In 1887, he and his family came to Pretty Prairie, Kansas where he was elected to the ministry of the First Mennonite Church, and was ordained by Elder Jacob Stucky on November 1, 1887, served as assistant pastor to Rev. J. J. Flickinger from November 1, 1887 to April 28, 1917. During which time he married 24 couples, besides speaking comforting words to many bereaved and sorrowing ones.

Having only a very limited education, his was a simple, yet very touching and had a forceful prayer life. He preached free, gratis and farmed for a living. He died April 28, 1917, at the age of 71 years.



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### 13. LIFE STORY OF DEACON PETER A. GRABER



DEACON AND MRS. PETER A. GRABER

Peter A. Graber, son of Peter A. and Katy Senner Graber was born February 5, 1857. He came to South Dakota from Russia, with his parents, in 1874 where he married Freni Albrecht, daughter of Jacob and Marie Stucky Albrecht. To this union 5 children were born. Carrie and Ben P. were born in South Dakota. In 1884 they came to the vicinity of Pretty Prairie, Kansas, where Lizzie, Leah and John were born. On March 5, 1892 his wife Freni died, leaving him to care for 5 small children.

He later found a life companion in widow Mary Graber, who had 3 children, John D., Peter D. A. and Lena by a former marriage. To this union were born Ed P. and Anna.

Mr. Graber was elected to the office of Deacon on November 1, 1887, and was ordained by Elder Jacob Stucky, in which capacity he served until he resigned in 1914. He also served as Sunday school superintendent and later as member of the church board.

In 1934 he mourned the loss of his second wife Mary. After a prolonged illness he too passed to his reward on January 16, 1938, at the age of 81 years, 11 months and 11 days.

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#### 14. LIFE STORY OF REV. JACOB B. EPP



REV. JACOB B. EPP



MRS. JACOB B. EPP

Rev. Jacob B. Epp, son of Rev. John and Margarete Bergman-Epp, was born April 6, 1874, at Koeppental, "Am Trakt" (Wolga) Russia where he attended village school from 1880-87, and high school from 1887 - 88. On May 29, 1889, he was baptized upon his confession of faith by Rev. John Quiring. He served as assistant clerk at "Gebietsamt", Russia from 1889-92.

He later came to America with his parents and settled at Newton, Kansas, where he attended Bethel Academy from 1894-97, and Bethel Junior College from 1898-1900. From 1903-05 he attended the Union Mission Training, Institute (National Bible Institute) in New York, and then South Western Baptist Theological Seminary at Fort Worth, Texas from 1926-28.

He married Nettie K. Harms from Whitewater, Kansas on June 29, 1905, to which union were born Theodore Herman and Ida Esther, and they adopted Dorothy Viola, a Hopi Indian. Theodore H. being the founder of the "Back to the Bible Broadcast" at Lincoln, formerly of Grand Island, Nebraska. On February 11, 1913, Rev. Epp's wife died, leaving him to care for three small children. On April 2, 1914, however, he was again united in Holy wedlock, this time to Johanna Von Steen of Beatrice, Nebraska, and to this union, one daughter, Helen Margaret was born.

From 1896-99, he was teacher in a Parochial school (German) at Newton, Kansas, for three summers. He also taught English-German Mennonite District school at Winkler, Manitoba, from 1897-98, and in an Indian Mission school at Contonment, Oklahoma, from 1900-01.

From 1901-13, he was missionary to the Hopi Indians at Araibi, Arizona. He was then teacher and principal at the Vereins-Schule and Oklahoma Bible Academy and Pastor of the New Hopefield Church at Meno, Oklahoma, from 1913-30 (with intermissions). He was the founder of the Oklahoma Bible Academy.

In 1919 he accepted the call as Pastor of the Pretty Prairie Mennonite Church, where he served until 1922, when he moved to Newton, Kansas, and was Editor of "Der Herold" from 1922- 23. He later was instructor at Hesston College, Hesston, Kansas, from 1928-29. In 1931 he became part-time field worker for missions among Russians, until he accepted the call as pastor of the Mennonite Church at Orienta, Oklahoma, in 1932, serving until 1935. Since 1936 he was serving the Hopefield Mennonite Church at Moundridge, and at Madrid, Nebraska, besides being Bible teacher, giving Bible and Missionary Lectures, etc.

He held honorary positions as President of Kansas Mennonite Teachers Association from 1899-1900; President of the Educational Committee of the Western District Conference from 1917-22, and Secretary of Progress and Business



Committee of General Conference from 1914-23; he was also German Secretary of the Second All-Mennonite Convention, and a member of the school Board of the Oklahoma Bible Academy a number of years.

Besides the above he was author of the following: Bible Correspondence Course; English and German Pamphlets, Mission and Educational; Treaties on Revelation. He wrote many articles for Mennonite periodicals; compiled the Hopi-English, and English-Hopi dictionaries; a Hopi Grammar, Hopi Gospel Hymns, Practical Lessons in the Hopi language, and translated the Stories of the Bible, Old and New Testament into, Hopi.

From 1919-21, while pastor here at Pretty Prairie Mennonite Church, he received into the church by, baptism 78 members and united in marriage 11 couples, besides having had charge of a number of funerals. He died December 22, 1945, at the Bethel Deaconess Hospital at Newton, Kansas at the age of 71 years.

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### 15. LIFE STORY OF REV. N. W. BAHNMANN



REV. AND MRS. N. W. BAHNMANN

Rev. Nicolai W. Bahnmann, son of Henry P. Bahnmann and Katarina Wiens-Bahnmann, was born February 12, 1879, at Berdjansk, Russia. He was baptized upon his confession of faith June 3, 1898, by Elder Toews and entered the ministry as an Evangelist in 1900. After a few years in America, he sailed back to Russia and brought his parents to Canada.

He was united in marriage to Meta C. Regier of Laird, Saskatchewan, on March 26, 1908. To this union were born 12 children, Helmuth, Hilda, Waldo, Elfriede, Irma, Hertha, Olga, Henry, Wilfred, Arthur, Edna and Orlando.

He attended elementary school at Berdjansk, Russia, from 1886-92 and high school at Orloff, Russia, from 1892 - 95, also Teacher's Seminary at Halbstadt, Russia, from 1897-99, and the Theological Seminary of the Moravian Church at Niesky, Silesia, Germany from 1899-1900. In America he attended Bethel College at Newton, Kansas, from 1900-02, and the Bible Institute at Los Angeles, California, in 1910.

He was Evangelist of the Canadian Mennonite Conference from 1910-12; Pastor of the Immanuel Methodist Church at Los Angeles, California, from 1913-14, and Itinerary Pastor of the General Conference of North America for the Canadian Field from 1915-22.

In June 1922 he accepted the call to the First Mennonite Church of Pretty Prairie to serve as Pastor, and was ordained as Elder

on October 21, 1922, by Elder H. R. Voth. He served this church until October 1925, receiving into the church by baptism 61 young people and uniting in marriage 11 couples, besides having conducted and assisted at a number of funerals.

In 1927 he moved his family to Yarrow, B. C., where he organized a church, also organizing a church at Sardis, B. C., where he served until 1934. Later serving as Pastor of the Maravian Church, New Sarepta, Alberta, Canada, from 1934-35. From 1936-38 he was Itinerary Pastor of the General Conference of North America in the Canadian Field, and in 1944 he was Minister of the Coglans Church in Canada.

He also held the honorary position of Secretary of the Mennonite Conference of Canada from 1915-19; Associate Editor of the German Publication "Mitarbeiter" from 1915-17, and Editor of "Schulfreund" from 1917-18.

He died in British Columbia in February 1946, after a prolonged illness, at the age of 67 years.

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### 16. LIFE STORY OF REV. J. W. LORENZ

Rev. Jacob W. Lorenz, son of William Lorenz, was born December 12, 1874, at Friedensdorf, South Russia. In 1884 he moved with his parents to Tiegerweide, South Russia. Here he attended elementary school, and later high school at Ohrloff.



He was baptized by Elder Gerhard Nickel on June 2, 1904. He went to Neuchirchen in the Palatinate graduating from the Seminary here in 1910. He also attended school at London, England, for 8 months.

He returned to Russia in 1892 where he was ordained to the ministry by Elder D. Koop, Alexanderkrone, and was married the same year to Anna Thiessen, daughter of Jacob Thiessen of Roop, South Russia. In 1913 his first wife died, leaving him with one son Jacob.

When the First World War broke out in 1914, he was drafted into the sanitare service as doctor's assistance for three years. In 1917 he was married to Lena Thiessen, a sister of his first wife. To this union Walter, Hattie and Willie were born. Since the revolution made it impossible to live on the farm because of robbery, mobs and murder, he and his family moved to Halbstadt, Molotchna, where he served as principal teacher in a Deaconess school for five years.

On June 23, 1924, when the Mennonite immigration started, he and his family left Russia from Liechtenau by ship, sponsored by the Canadian Pacific Railroad, landing in Waterloo, Canada, on July 19, 1924. Here he met with much difficulty, being in a strange country with a strange language. One year later, on October 14, 1925, he accepted the pastorate of the First Mennonite Church of Pretty Prairie, Kansas, where he served until January 1, 1932, baptizing 88 members and uniting in marriage 25 couples. It was here he was also ordained as Elder by Elder P. H. Unruh on February 26, 1928. Also here his

REV and Mrs. J. W. Lorenz

youngest son Willie was fatally hit by an automobile on the way home from school.

Later having moved to Hutchinson, Kansas, he served the Arlington Church every alternate Sunday in the German language. He then suffered a light stroke which crippled his services greatly.



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### 17. LIFE STORY OF REV. S. M. MUSSELMAN

Rev. Samuel Moyer Musselman, son of Christian and Barbara Moyer Musselman, was born October 16, 1875, at Steinburg, Pennsylvania. He was united in marriage to Minerva Landis in June, 1903, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. To this union 4 children were born, Dwight a Arlington, Ohio; Vivian of Wichita, Kansas; Frances, now Mrs. Erwin Schrag of Pretty Prairie, Kansas, and George of Denver, Colorado.



He was ordained as minister by the Elders, N. B. Grubb, A. B. Shelley and L. O. Schimmel, in the First Mennonite Church at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Before his ordination he had already served the Germantown Church. In January 1903, he served the Wayland and Eicher churches in Iowa, and later the Bluffton, Ohio church before accepting the call to the Pretty Prairie Mennonite Church. He served as pastor from March 27, 1932 to May 27, 1937. While here he received into the church 109 members through baptism, and united in holy wedlock 32 couples.

Besides having served the Lorraine Ave. Church in Wichita, and the Johannesthal Church at Hillsboro, Kansas, he served as Board member of

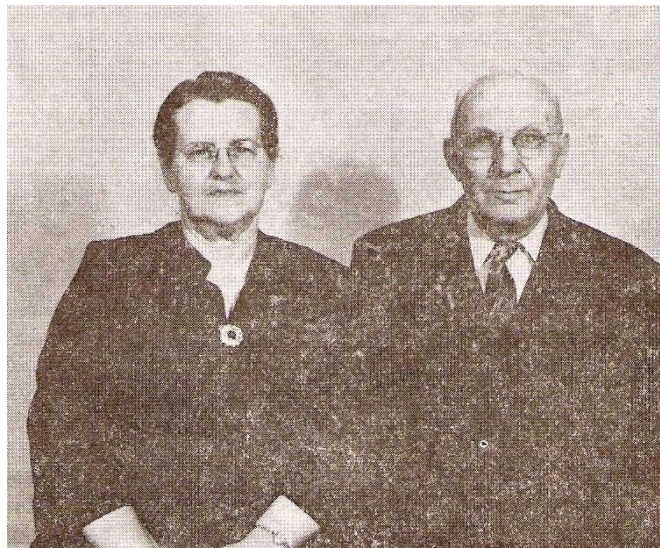
Bluffton College. He was also a member of the Foreign Mission Board and of the Home Mission Board of the Western District Conference.

Rev. Samuel Moyer Musselman

He died while serving the Johannesthal Church at Hillsboro, Kansas, July 29, 1938, at the age of 62 years.

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### 18. LIFE STORY OF REV. PETER P. TSCHETTER



REV. AND MRS. PETER P. TSCHETTER

Peter P. Tschetter, son of Paul W. and Katharina Hofer-Tschetter, was born May 19, 1886. He was married to Carra Dirks from Halstead, Kansas, May 19, 1916. To this union were born two boys and two girls, Paul William, Richard Daniel, Caroline

Elizabeth and Eva Ruth. He attended elementary school near Freeman, S. Dakota, and received his higher education at Freeman College Academy from 1903-04, 1905-08, and Freeman College Normal and Bible course from 1909-11. He attended Bethel College from 1911-12, and Freeman College for three months in 1931. He was Pastor of the Bethlehem Church at Bloomfield, Montana, from 1913-15, and at Hydro, Montana, from 1915-18. From 1919-21 he traveled for the Home Mission Board of the General Conference. He did Evangelistic work in South Dakota from 1921-26, and at the same time preached alternate Sundays in different churches. He was Pastor of the Hutterthal Church from 1927-37, during which time he was out much of the time doing Evangelistic work, mostly in Canada. He also taught Bible school at Gretna, Manitoba from 1936-37 for five months.

On June 16, 1937, he accepted the call to the Pretty Prairie Mennonite Church where he served until June 22, 1948, when his family moved to Omaha Nebraska, and he stayed over with our church until August 31 of the same year, until Rev. Nyce came to serve. Joining his family in Omaha, he was field Representative for the Grace Bible Institute from 1948-52. At present Rev. Tschetter is Pastor of the Bethany Mennonite Church at Kingman, Kansas.

While Rev. Tschetter was Pastor here he baptized some 170 young people, and officiated and assisted at some 93 weddings. He consecrated 87 infants, and had charge of 58 funerals. He held Evangelistic meetings at various places, besides having ordained several young people into the ministry while here.

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## 19. THE GOERING PROPOSAL

When the Pretty Prairie Mennonite Church was first organized, the Vorstand or Board of Directors consisted of three members whose duty it was to handle all the affairs of the church in cooperation with the spiritual counsel who then were the two ministers and one deacon, namely Rev. John J. Flickinger, Rev. John G. Graber and Peter A. Graber as deacon.

Because of increasing friction in the church, all three members of the spiritual counsel resigned on the same day, on January 27, 1914. As a result our congregation invited Rev. John C. Goering to sit in our special business meeting in the interest of unity. Rev. Goering gave us a Vorlage or proposition of regulations which our church adopted for a period of three years. These regulations changed the functions and duties of the church board as the church's leadership was then placed in their hands for the three coming years. The Arbitration committee was at that time also established by the adoption of this proposition.

After the three years had expired the desired unity was not restored. Factions were more marked than before, so on February 19, 1917, it was decided to appeal to the conference committee, which came on March 5 and 6 of the same year. Among the six resolutions adopted at these sessions was again the resolution that the leadership of our church be vested in the church board, which decided to call a minister from elsewhere. So Rev. J. B. Epp was called and accepted the pastorate.

In 1920 our church adopted a new constitution, in which the office of Trusteeship was established to handle the finances of the church. All previous officials then resigned so new ones could be elected as prescribed by that constitution, which was printed in the German language in booklet form, The functions of a deacon in the three members of the church board to be installed by a simple ordination, and thus was the splitting of the church averted at that critical season, and ever since that time our church has been calling its pastor from elsewhere.



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## 20. THE CONSTITUTION

The early Constitution was short and somewhat indefinite; it was written in the old church book, and was to be read before the assembled congregation from time to time.

As I remember it, a three member (Vorstand) Church Board in cooperation with the two ministers and one deacon handled all of the affairs of the church, as finances and otherwise. The ministers and deacons were the Spiritual Counsel.



REVISION COMMITTEE OF CONSTITUTION AT DR. NYCE'S HOME REVISING  
THE CONSTITUTION, 1953

Not on Picture: Herman D. Graber, Ben A. Schrag and Amos Flickinger

In 1914 sweeping changes were made following the resignation of both Ministers and the deacon. The Goering proposal (Vorlage) was then adopted in the interest of church unity. These regulations proposed the creating of an arbitration board to handle any complaints between members. The leadership of the church was now vested in the church board. This elevated them to a spiritual counsel, rather than a board of financial matters as before. This was adopted for three years, and after the expiration of this proposal the conference committee continued with similar regulations, leaving the control in the three member board.

The finance committee or board of trustees was then also established by adopting several resolutions of the conference committee.

In 1920 a new constitution was drawn and adopted, and was printed in a German booklet. At this adoption all previous officers resigned to make way for new ones to be elected. and to function according to the rules adopted. The office and responsibility of deacons was also vested in these board members, and the deacons together with the pastor as chairman then comprised the spiritual counsel.

In 1938 this constitution was revised; some clauses were deleted and others changed. This was adopted and printed in a German-English booklet. And in 1953 this Constitution was again revised, and the Board of Deacons enlarged to five members. This was adapted and printed in booklet form in English only. The new constitution shows, other boards were established, and other changes made from time to time during the last decade.

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## **FOREWORD OF CONSTITUTION OF JANUARY 7, 1895**

O LORD! Grant that by Thy grace the souls of all persons recorded in this church register may also be written in the Book of Life in heaven, and that they might be washed and cleansed in the blood of Jesus Christ, and that by His grace they will not come into judgment, but have passed from death unto Life.

Grant, O God the Father, who hath created us for an eternal salvation, and who had sent His Son into the world as Savior and Lord to be a propitiation for our sins; and that God the Son who bought us with His own blood; and that God the Holy Spirit who proceeded from the Father and the Son, may guide and direct us into all truth.

As the Mennonite Church, we are assembled, together here this 7th day of January, 1895, because we deem it necessary to set up rules and regulations in accordance with the Word of God that will be beneficial to the furtherance of a common cause, and the activities of this church, we will endeavor to do this to the glory of God, and for a common benefit.

God commands us to serve one another with the gifts each has received as good stewards of the manifold grace of God, I Peter 4:10; and that we should have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, Eph. 5:11. Though we have only ordinary talent, we are to serve with whatsoever gifts we have received. There should be unity and order in all things, even in the temporal things: for if we are unfaithful in the temporal, who will entrust to us the heavenly or spiritual things.

### **ARTICLE I**

Every male member over 21 years of age, in our present congregation, shall endorse the regulations with their signature; this will then in effect be our constitution. Such names shall be recorded in our church book from time to time. All younger members under 21, as well as all women will be counted without signature; and such as will join by letter will by receipt of same be so received as members as they signify their intention of acceptance of duty and responsibility.

### **ARTICLE II**

We shall endeavor to be prompt in all devotional and business meetings, and no member is to be absent without sufficient reason, especially at the business meetings. The congregation present will at any business meeting be considered a quorum with authority to transact all business.

### **ARTICLE III**

It is the duty and privilege at any election of the church for each member to vote, especially at the annual business meetings. Each one shall help to decide or dispose of every matter, and the majority vote shall be the deciding factor in every case.

### **ARTICLE IV**

There shall be three (Vorsteher) directors elected to assist the minister. They shall each serve for a term of 3 years: one to be elected each year. The duty of this Board of Directors is to handle the affairs of the church in an orderly manner.

### **ARTICLE V**

To transact all church business there shall be two business meetings each year, one in February and one in September, and all discussions shall be led by a chairman elected for this purpose annually; also all resolutions passed shall be recorded in a minute book by a Secretary chosen for this office each year.

### **ARTICLE VI**

In electing a minister the church may decide according to the Scriptures how such an election shall be conducted.

### **ARTICLE VII**

The Holy Communion shall be observed twice yearly and oftener if the need arises. Baptism shall be performed upon confession of faith, preceded by catechetical instructions, and after a thorough examination, and upon their desire and vow shall Baptism be performed.

### **ARTICLE VIII**

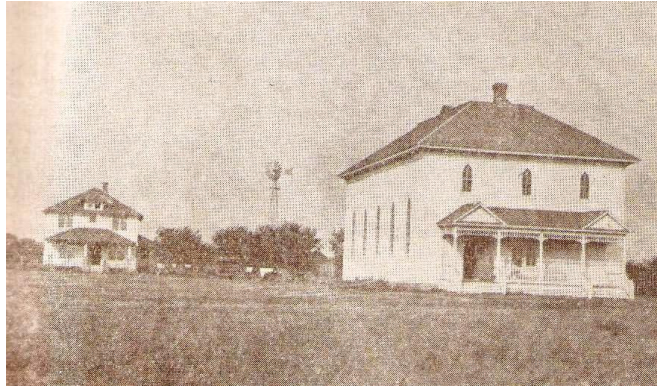
Because marriage was instituted of God, it is therefore a church rule that it be performed by the minister of the church, or the minister of one of our sister churches. And if a member of this congregation marries a member of any other faith, such a person shall be considered as forfeiting his or her membership in this church.

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## 21. THE CORNERSTONE-LAYING SERVICE

There was no ground-breaking service held when the church basement was started, but we did have an impressive formal inauguration service on May 27, 1927, which was conducted on the south side of the church foundation after the basement was completed and the under floor laid.

Rev. J. W. Lorenz applied some mortar with a trowel on the cement foundation, and the contractor then completed the masonry. The marble stone which was laid in place was especially prepared in Kingman, Kansas, for the purpose of encasing the names of the Spiritual Counsel who were Rev. J. W. Lorenz, Jacob B. Graber, Amos Flickinger and Jacob J. Graber.



MENNONITE CHURCH AND PARSONAGE, 1924

Also enclosed were the names of the building committee, who were J. R. Krehbiel, Emil Flickinger, Jacob A. Schwartz, Jake Soft, P. J. Krehbiel, Eli K. Stucky, J. J. Kaufman, John J. Vogt, Jacob J. Graber and Peter C. Graber. Peter A. Schwartz, Peter H. Graber and A. H. Schrag were the trustees then. It is not certain, however, whether the trustees' names were also put in the encasement or not.

While the contractor was completing the masonry Rev. J. W. Lorenz and Rev. J. J. Flickinger each gave a short address based on various scripture passages, of which were Gen. 28:16-22 and I Chron. 29:14-16, where Jacob awoke and said, "Surely, the Lord is in this place and I knew it not.... this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." And Jacob anointed the rock whereon he had slept, and vowed that it shall be a house of God, and called it Bethel. And in I Chron. 29:14-16 David said, "For all things come of Thee, and of thine own have we given thee. For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on earth are as a shadow and there is none abiding. O Lord our God, all this store that we have prepared to build thee a house for thine Holy name, cometh of thine hand, and is thine own."

It is believed by some that the corner-stone laying program with a short history of our church also was enclosed in the encasement, which undoubtedly is in the German language.



MENNONITE CHURCH, 1905-1927, LAST SERVICE BEFORE IT WAS DISMANTLED



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**22. DEDICATE PRETTY PRAIRIE CHURCH**  
**(Report Given The Week of February 5 by Mennonite Weekly Review)**  
**Approximately Two Thousand People Attended; Structure of Brick and Tile.**

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The formal dedication of the new Mennonite church located three miles east of Pretty Prairie, Kansas, occurred last Sunday; February 5. Since early last year, when the old church was razed to make room for the new, the congregation had looked forward to this day with great anticipation; and according to various expressions the members realized their hopes even beyond what was expected. Weather conditions were almost ideal and a crowd numbering well over 2000 people attended the services throughout the day.

According to the scheduled program, the services were begun at 9:30 o'clock, at which time a large number of people from the home community and other communities had gathered before the entrance of the church, where the pastor, Rev. J. W. Lorenz, read Psalm 100, to which the choir responded with an appropriate song. The keys to the building were then handed over to the trustees and the people entered the church. Here the service was opened by an address of welcome by Rev. J. J. Flickinger, the church's former pastor. Another selection by the choir followed this, and Rev. J. P. Linsheid, of Arlington, read a portion of Scripture and offered the introductory prayer. After a splendid musical rendition by a quartet from Bethel College, Dr. J. W. Kliever, president of Bethel College, addressed the congregation in the English language, taking for his theme the text, "And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch." Throughout the address Dr. Kliever pointed to that early Christian church as an example for modern churches, and expressed the hope that its spirit may be fostered and developed in the congregation now being blessed with a new church home.

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**Dedicatory Address by Rev. P. P. Wedel**

The formal dedicatory sermon was delivered in the German language by Rev. P. P. Wedel of Moundridge, who is now chairman of the General Conference. For the basis of his expositions Rev. Wedel took a portion of Solomon's prayer for God's blessing on the new temple which he was about to dedicate, and emphasized that a true dedication implies that the congregation reconsecrate itself to the wholehearted service of God.

The new church was then formally dedicated in a prayer spoken by Rev. J. W. Lorenz.

The concluding address of the morning program was given by Rev. A. H. Hankins, pastor of the Methodist Church of Pretty Prairie. Rev. Hankins was especially emphatic in expressing the mutual joy of the Methodist people with the Mennonites for their new church.

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**Large Community Dinner**

Almost the entire crowd took dinner in the basement, the dinner having been prepared and served by the ladies of the church. After all had eaten, enough food remained to serve another such crowd, so all were invited to return for supper.

The chief topic for the afternoon program, which began at two o'clock, was Home Missions. This theme was very ably discussed in addresses given by Rev. Zimmerman of Sterling; Rev. C. E. Krehbiel of Newton, Rev. S. P. Moutet, pastor of the Bethany Church of Kingman, Rev. P. H. Richert of Goessel, and Rev. P. M. Dinsmore, pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Pretty Prairie. Rev. Zimmerman and Rev. Dinsmore spoke in the English language, and each extended to the Mennonite congregation the good wishes of their respective denominations. A letter from Rev. J. B. Epp of Seminary Hill, Texas, a former pastor of the Pretty Prairie Church, was read by Rev. J. W. Lorenz. Other features lending variation to the afternoon program were musical selections rendered by the church choir, by the Bethel College quartet, and a solo by Miss Edna Graber.

A splendid musical program was rendered in the evening, before an audience which more than filled the spacious church. The principal part of this program was the rendition of the Cantata "Zion", by the church choir, and which concluded the dedicatory program. This service had been opened by Rev. Philip Wedel and was closed with a prayer by Rev. J. W. Lorenz. As one speaker termed it, the new church is and should be "a memorial to the gospel of Jesus Christ," and this was the thought generally emphasized in all addresses given during the days.

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**Built of Brick**

The new church is built entirely of tile and rough surfaced brick, having a basement under the whole structure. The floor is of high grade hardwood, with the main auditorium furnished with pews of oak. The interior has been given a brilliant white

finish, and is equipped throughout with a modern steam heating system and beautiful electrical fixtures. The gallery extends around one-half of the building. One especially valued feature of the church is a splendid toned Packard Grand piano, which was purchased shortly before the church was finished. The acoustics in the auditorium are very good and sound carries well.

The total cost of the church, not including material taken from the old church building and labor done by members of the congregation, amounts to \$33,000. Of this sum only a very small amount is unpaid.

Every member of the congregation, which numbers somewhat more than 400, had a definite part and interest in the erection and completion of the new church, which now stands as a landmark for the community, erected for the furtherance and extension of the Kingdom of God.

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### **23. HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND THEIR DEVELOPMENTS FROM 1884-1934**

**Translated from the German, Rendered at the 50th Anniversary of the First Mennonite Church of Pretty Prairie, Kansas October 14, 1934, by J. A. Stucky**

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While our forefathers migrated from Russia to America in quest of religious and military freedom, the settling by our people to this locality was mostly for economic and climatic reasons. The group coming from South Dakota thought the winters there too severe and long, while those coming from McPherson County were seeking cheaper land. The Santa Fe Railroad had land to sell in Reno County for \$6.00 and \$7.00 per acre, which was reported to those living in South Dakota by their kin folk from McPherson County. Winter wheat and fruit could be raised in Kansas which was a drawing card.

The credit for choosing this locality is due primarily to Jacob Wedel, Peter Goering, Andrew Goering, John Stucky, Peter W. Kaufman, John Senner and Jacob Preheim, who first inspected Reno, Kingman, Harper and Pratt Counties. They centered on this locality and reserved by Brown and Bigger of Hutchinson a certain amount of sections. Soon after this land was thoroughly inspected by a large group from McPherson County and S. Dakota, twenty-two vehicles were used to convey this party from Hutchinson to this land. Some of them bought land at that time, while others from S. Dakota had their relatives from Kansas buy for them. The Railroad Company owned alternate sections. The rest of the land at that time was homesteaded. Several bought such improved farms. Very little capital was brought here. Some even had to borrow the money for a down payment. The young men from S. Dakota had no land to sell there, and those that did sell there, sold very cheap. Some even mortgaged their land there and came here.

This country then was mostly native grass of prairie, hence Pretty Prairie, and to make a home on this prairie, naturally everything had to be brought here. Most of the immigrants brought horses with them to convert this prairie into crop land, while some used oxen.

Hutchinson, Kingman, Cheney and Haven were the closest towns to get lumber and other building material, and it was hauled that distance with a wagon, which was very inconvenient and slow. Some groceries could be bought at Purity, which was a half mile east and two south of the Mennonite church, and at Old Pretty Prairie, then located one and a half west and one mile south of Pretty Prairie.

Most of the houses were of the 1 and 2-room type (12-14 or 14-16 ft.), while some were larger and had an upstairs. One of the better ones still remains, about as 50 years ago, on the Andrew Goering farm. The material for such a residence then cost about \$140.00 to \$260.00. Some kitchens even had a clay or dirt floor. The barns and other buildings were also small. Much of the furniture was self made and in the larger families generally a bench took the place of a number of chairs. The wells were either dug or drilled. The former about 4 1/2 ft. in diameter and the latter about 15 inches, and laid out with wood and stone. A frame, rope and bucket were used, which reminds one of the song, "The Old Oaken Bucket that Hung in the Well." To draw water with such an apparatus in real cold weather was no pleasure.

Walking plows were then used and one man with a good team of horses could plow two or three acres a day. Sowing was either done broadcast or with hoe drill. No doubt, many remember how tired they used to get tramping the stubble out of the hoe drill. Harvesting was done with a binder or header. Twenty, forty, or even eighty acres were at that time considered average size wheat acreage. Threshing was formally done with horsepower and later with a steam engine. There were then no self-feeders or blowers on the threshing machines, which afforded young men a chance to work hard and earn a little money. Prior to 1900 no one farmer of our people ever raised 3000 bushel of grain in one crop, many not over 500 bushel. And in those times corn was about as extensively planted as wheat. Some American neighbors raised no wheat at all. The first three years, from 1885 to 1888, were total failures. It took some courage to stay at it as everybody, without exception, was in debt, and to borrow money was almost impossible. If they could borrow, several signers were needed, and as

much as 24% interest was paid, and as a result many lost their farms, and those that still held on were in debt for all their land was worth then. And when times got better, some bought back their land, while others bought other land.

Dairying, poultry and stock raising were done on a very small scale for lack of funds and because of distance to market these products were very cheap. In 1889 the railroad was built out of Hutchinson and through Collingwood's influence Pretty Prairie was built on their land, greatly relieving the situation in this respect. The elevator was built eight years later, and Pretty Prairie soon had a number of grocery stores, one of which was the "Goering-Krehbiel" which opened in 1894. About the same time a bank was also opened by Willis Baker, and a creamery in 1895.

1889 and 1890 were good corn years, with corn selling from 10 to 17 cents a bushel. At that time Pretty Prairie had as many corn cribs as it had houses, and before the elevator was built all grain had to be scooped by hand.

In those days, when grim death entered a home, no undertaker was called. And a new top buggy or carriage were as much appreciated then as a new car is today.

In 1891, when the strip opened in Oklahoma for settlement, some of our people went to Oklahoma. Later several families went to Kingman County where the price of land was cheaper, and as land prices went up several families went to Monroe, Washington. At different time's families from McPherson County settled here. The price of land was somewhat cheaper here. Thus adding to our group. In 1896 a number of houses were moved to this locality from Kingman. Good houses and large barns were now also being built.

After 1900 better farming equipment could be purchased. Times were getting better and people were able to buy more land. In 1904 the telephones were installed, and the mail route was started. In 1910 some already bought automobiles, and in 1914 they were general. Tractors came into use in 1916, in 1919 the combine and the radio in 1923.

At the start the members of this church controlled about 36 quarters, now upward of 200, and many of the original homesteads are still held in the family. The credit for enduring pioneer hardships, aside from the providence of God, is due our ancestors. Surely perseverance, frugality and honesty lay at the bottom of this economic achievement. The purpose in studying the history of this development is to recognize the Divine hand of God, and to preserve the heritage which is well worth keeping. We should certainly not be ashamed of the Faith, simplicity in life and other virtues our ancestors stood for. We had no choice as to the place we were set in life. Deut. 32:8 reads, "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." And Acts 17:26 reads: "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." So it isn't just chance that we are in Pretty Prairie, Kansas, U. S. A. The Divine Hand of God has something to do with it after all.

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#### **24. CHURCH CELEBRATES FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS FOUNDING (As Printed by the Staff Correspondent of The Mennonite Weekly Review October 17, 1934)**

Pretty Prairie, Kansas—Fifty years of development and growth passed in review at the First Mennonite Church near here last Sunday, when the congregation celebrated its golden anniversary. The celebration was of particular interest since all former ministers, except one, were present and participated in the day's program. Together with Rev. S. M. Musselman, who is in the service at the present time, and the retired minister, Rev. J. J. Flickinger, who is still a member of the congregation, the three nonresident ministers who had once served the church were seated on the rostrum in the order of their service: Rev. J. B. Epp, Fairview, Oklahoma; Rev. N. W. Bahnmann, Canada; and Rev. J. W. Lorenz, Hutchinson, Kansas. Among them was also Peter A. Graber, who for many years was a member of the board of deacons. Rev. J. G. Graber, co-founder of the church, passed away in 1917.

During the Sunday school program which opened the service in the forenoon, Rev. Phil. A. Wedel, Moundridge, gave a brief review of the Sunday school lesson, while two members of the congregation, Jacob Kaufman and Eli Stucky, traced the development of the Sunday school since its inception in 1884 up to the present time.

With the theme of the day being "Ebenezer, hitherto hath the Lord helped us," this benedictory expression characterized the short sermons given by four former ministers during the anniversary service in the forenoon. Introductory thoughts were given by Rev. J. S. Flickinger, while Rev. J. B. Epp, Rev. N. W. Bahnmann, and Rev. J. W. Lorenz succeeded each other in 20-minute addresses in which they reviewed their years of service in the church and admonished the members to remain steadfast in the true faith during the years to come. Several numbers of special music were rendered by the church choir, the girls' glee club and the boys' glee dub. The entire anniversary service, as well as the program of afternoon, was held in the German language.



At noon the members of the congregation and all the guests present, who numbered well over 1500 persons, were invited for a lunch served in the church basement.

As a theme for the program of the afternoon Proverbs 22:28 had been selected: "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set." J. J. Graber and P. J. Graber, former song leaders, directed a period of congregational singing. Their method was of interest because of its similarity to that used several decades ago when the congregation would sing parts of a verse progressively as it was read by the leader. A choir composed of older members of the church, directed by J. P. O. Graber then rendered two selections and Rev. J. P. Linsheid of the Arlington Mennonite Church led in prayer.

The history of the congregation was given by Rev. J. J. Flickinger, senior minister of the church. Briefly sketching developments leading to the founding of the church, Rev. Flickinger pointed out that the first settlers came to Pretty Prairie community from Freeman, S. Dakota, and from the Hoffnungsfeld congregation near Moundridge, Kansas, as early as 1878. These pioneering settlers were all younger people. They first congregated in the home of Andreas Schwartz, and there the meetings continued until after the church was organized in 1884. Later a store building which was moved into the settlement served as a meeting house. Rev. J. J. Flickinger served as the first minister although a second minister, Rev. J. G. Graber, was chosen in 1886. In 1897 the original church building was wrecked by a storm but was rebuilt on its former dimensions. Seven years later the new structure was destroyed by fire, and again the congregation set about to erect a larger church. In 1927 the present enlarged brick edifice was built and dedicated to accommodate the congregation which now numbers nearly 500 members. Later ministers of the church were: Rev. J. B. Epp, 1919-1921; Rev. N. W. Bahnmann, 1921-1925; Rev. J. W. Lorenz, 1925-1932; Rev. S. M. Musselman, 1932—.

Jonathan Stucky gave an account of the agricultural development of the community from the time hand plows were drawn by oxen until the modern combine came into use. Much of the land purchased by first settlers was formerly owned by the Santa Fe Railroad.

The history of the Women's Mission Society of the church was given by Mrs. P. P. Schrag, while Harvey L. Krehbiel told of the development of the Christian Endeavor Society. After rendition of inspiring music by men's and ladies' quartets, brief reminiscences by older members of the congregation concluded the program of the afternoon.

The following young people's program was given in the evening: Chairman, Irvin Graber; Introduction and prayer by Rev. N. W. Bahnmann; girls' quartet; "History" of our Forefathers, " Waldo Flickinger; male quartet; reading, Eldon Graber; "Challenge of the Future," Vivienne' Musselman; "Our Heritage—Our Responsibility," Rev. P. P. Wedel, Moundridge, Kansas.

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## 25. THE FIRST MENNONITE SUNDAY SCHOOL SYSTEM

The first Sunday school was organized shortly after the church was founded in 1884. Its first superintendent was Jacob Kaufman, after whom Jacob Graber served, who later moved to Topeka, Kansas. It then consisted of four German classes of 88 members. In 1934, as reported at the 50th Anniversary by Eli K. Stucky, Superintendent at that time, we had 750 members, with a staff of 26 teachers serving 20 German and six English classes, including the primary and beginners department. At present we have 35 classes of 955 students all of which are in the English language with the exception of a few of the older peoples' classes.

The Sunday school committee then as now consisted of a Superintendent, who acted as chairman, an assistant Superintendent, a Secretary and a Treasurer. A sufficient number of teachers were elected annually by its members, and the committee filled any vacancies of teachers, and made all necessary rules. Now the adult classes each elect their respective teacher, except the Kindergarten and primary teachers, which are still elected by the Sunday school and assigned to suitable classes by the committee, as the children's classes which are being divided by grades; while the adult groups choose their own classes by age and interest. The Kindergarten group begins with 4-year olds.

The Sunday school calendar of service is 1 hour. It begins at 9:30 A. M. from April 1 to October 1, and at 10:00 A. M. the rest of the year.

The first Sunday school had no instrumental music, and had only a few song books, and as some of the older people could not read fluently, a song leader would give the vocal pitch and the congregation would sing the song progressively, as it was read in parts by the leader. The Jubeltone song books were first used then the Heilslieder, later the Gospel Hymns No. 1 and 2, and now the Tabernacle Hymns and Mennonite Hymnary.

In 1909 an organ was purchased which at first was only permitted for choir singing, later, however, also for congregational

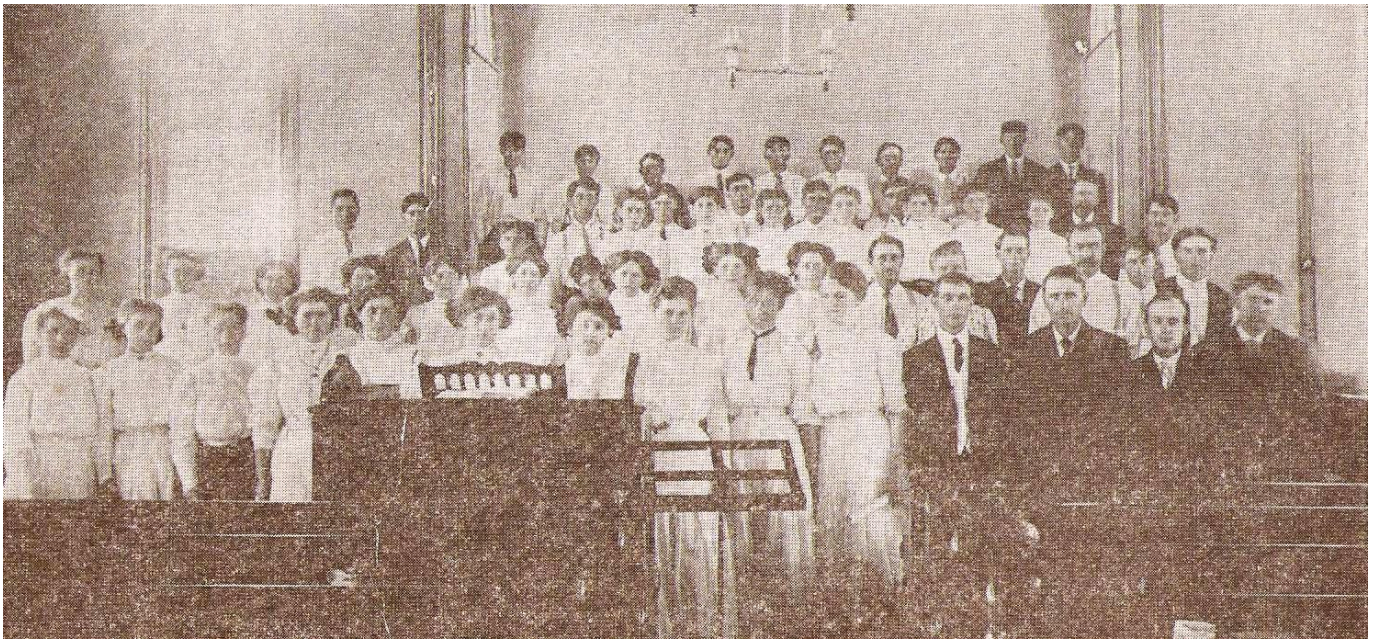
singing. A few years later a piano was purchased, and in 1928 when the present brick edifice was erected a new grand piano was bought, then in 1951 the Wicks electric pipe organ was installed.

Each year the Sunday school committee, with the help of the junior teachers, have sponsored a Christmas Eve program. All children under the baptismal age participated. To gladden the occasion a Christmas tree is set up, and gifts are distributed to all children present, made possible by members of the Sunday school for this purpose.

In the last decade all classes have lifted a monthly offering to a mission fund to help support the different missionaries going out from our church. Those being Harold Grabers, Miss Elsie Winsinger, Miss Mary Schrag, Calvin Flickinger, and Miss Amy Winsinger.

The following are some of the members who have faithfully served as Superintendent of our Sunday school since it was founded:

Jacob Kaufman	John J. Graber	Peter J. Albright	Arthur Waltner
Jacob Graber	John C. Kaufman	J. J. Kaufman	Emil Krehbiel
Andrew Schwartz	Jacob A. Schwartz	Eli K. Stucky	Phil J. Graber
Peter A. Graber	Peter D. A. Graber	B. J. Stucky	Ed H. Graber
Joe C. Graber, Sr.	Jonas A. Stucky	Ed Schwartz	Gilbert Stucky
John Goering	Jacob J. Graber	Amos Flickinger	Harry Flickinger
Jacob Krehbiel	John R. Graber	H. D. Graber	
John C. Schwartz	John R. Krehbiel	Jonas Albright	



Picture of Choir, 1939

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## 26. CONGREGATIONAL AND CHOIR SINGING

Congregational singing has been a part of the worship service ever since the Mennonite church was organized, while choir singing was organized some years later.

Books were few as some of the older people could not read fluently, song leaders were elected which gave the pitch and led the singing. The congregation then would sing parts of a verse progressively as it was read by the leader.

Some of the early song leaders were Joseph Stucky, John C. Schwartz, Jacob Krehbiel, Peter J. Graber and Jacob J. Graber. The "Jubeltone" and "Gesangbuch mit Noten" were of the first song books used, later the "Heilslieder" and "Evangeliumslieder", while at present we are using the Tabernacle Hymns No. 2 and the Hymnary.

About 1898 John Barkman, John P. O. Graber and other Bible school teachers organized song practice in public school houses. Then U. S. Amstutz taught young peoples classes in music and singing in the church. Later Peter A. Schwartz assisted by



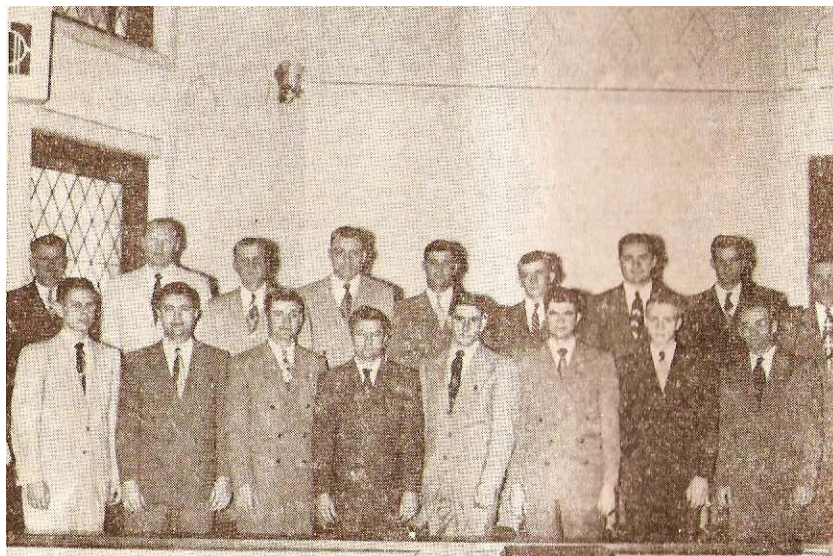
others, took over and so the church choir was started. Some of the choir leaders besides the above named were Barnard Schwartz, Fred A. Krehbiel, Walter J. J. Graber, Raymond Stucky, Walter W. Graber, Miss Hieb and others.

In 1909 the first organ was purchased, which was the first year permitted for choir singing only.



ONE OF OUR QUARTETS DURING THE  
30's AND LATER  
LEFT TO RIGHT: EDWIN KREHBIEL,  
LAWRENCE KAUFMAN  
FRED KREHBIEL AND LEO VORAN

Then in 1914 a piano was bought, and in 1928 the new grand piano was purchased for the dedication of the present brick edifice. And since 1951 our choir and congregational singing has been enhanced with the new Wicks electric pipe organ, which was dedicated with one week of Home Coming Services, from October 28 to November 4, with a different guest organist, each evening, and with the Rev's Victor Graber, Boyd Bonebrake, Richard Tschetter, Richard Ratzlaff, Waldo Kaufman and Dr. John B. Graber, each speaking one evening during the week, all of which are of home talent.



MEN'S CHOFIUS, 1954

BACK ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: ELMER GOERING, FRANK QUIRING, ORLAN  
ALBRIGHT, MARVIN SCHWARTZ, HARRY GOERING, DALE HUXMAN, LESTER  
SCHRAG, VICTOR GRABER AND DIRECTOR WALTER J. J. GRABER  
FRONT ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT: STANLEY KREHBIEL, JOE SCHRAG, HARVEY  
GOERING, WALTER SCHRAG, HARLAN WEDLL, ELMER SCHRAG, MELVERN  
ALBRIGHT AND VICTOR HUXMAN

Some of the early organists recalled are Mrs. B. A. Schwartz, Mrs. Emil Flickinger, Miss Anna Graber, Miss Ida Graber and Miss Ida Kaufman. Later were Misses Bertha Waltner, Lucy Graber, Emma Graber, Lorena Schwartz and others. Regular Pianists and organists are elected by the choir and the church.

Besides the congregational and choir singing our church audience is also favored with special music by the Men's chorus, Ladies' chorus, different octets, sextets, quartets, trios, duets and solos, and by the rendition of the "Messiah", as well as other oratorios given by local talent.

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## **27. THE HOLY SACRAMENT**

The Holy Sacrament is to be kept twice yearly as prescribed by the constitution. The church counsel decides on the day it is to be observed. It is usually announced two weeks in advance by the minister, who preaches a preparatory sermon a week before, warning every church member that has ought against anyone to be reconciled, and be in harmony, and ready to partake of the Lord's Supper. Members of sister churches who are guests on that day, and are in fellowship are cordially invited to likewise partake of the same with us after the communion sermon.

Bread and wine were formerly used. The wine now being substituted by grape juice. The bread signifies the broken body, and the wine or grape juice the blood shed for the remission of our sins. The bread was taken from an unsliced loaf of bread, the crust removed and the rest sliced into long narrow strips, which were neatly arranged on plates. It was blessed by the Elder, and while the Congregation sang an appropriate hymn the Elder would break the bread taken from the plate by a Deacon, and would repeat the words said of our Lord, as He had given thanks and passed out the bread to His disciples at the first supper, "Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me", thus passing the broken bread individually to each member who ate it as they received it.

This was later changed, when the bread was beforehand cut into small individual squares, and all seated in the same bench would rise as it was passed along to each member in the bench, each holding it until all in the same bench were served, and then it was eaten in unity; after which they sat down and the members in the next bench were served in like manner, until the whole congregation had partaken of the bread.

Next the cup was blessed and was passed in the same manner bench-wise to each member individually by the hand of the Elder, the Deacon holding the vessel, and the Elder repeating the words of our Lord in I Cor. 11:25. This having been changed later when the cup was passed from one to the other until it was empty, thus all drank of the same cup. Still later three cups were used, and since 1936 the Individual Communion Cup Trays have been used. The Elder blesses the grape juice and passes the trays with same to the Deacons, who in turn pass it to members in each bench, until all members of the Congregation have been served. Now, since we have the electric organ, instead of singing, the organ is being played softly during the Communion service. The Elder usually makes sure that no one has been overlooked, and he used to wear a long tailored coat when administering Sacrament or Baptism.

In the early years all the pioneers believed and practiced feet washing in connection with the communion service. After the Communion service had been closed with a prayer, and the Elder had read the 13th chapter of St. John, the sisters of the church brought basins with water and towels for the foot washing, which was done in pairs as an example of serving one another. Gradually some quit observing this act of humility. More, people lost interest until the church observes it in name only. However, if anyone still wishes to have feet washing he may still do so.

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## **28. ORDINANCE OF HOLY BAPTISM**

As. Mennonites, our Church has always held the baptismal services upon the confession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as his or her Personal Savior, and upon the vow or promise of the Catechistical candidate to endeavor to live a Christian life. Baptism is preceded by Catechistical instruction, conducted by the standing minister, during which time the candidate is to be brought under conviction of sin, and to accept the Lord as his or her personal Savior. Upon their desire to be baptized, the standing Pastor, if he is an ordained Elder performs the Ceremony with the help of one Deacon by pouring of the baptismal water with the cup. All candidates kneel during the ceremony until the Elder gives them the hand of fellowship, thus welcoming them a full pledged member of our congregation.

When our church was first organized it used the method of the Elder placing both hands upon the head of the kneeling candidate, and as he pronounced the words prescribed by our manual, the Deacon poured the Baptismal water into the hands of the Elder, and the Elder in turn applied it on the candidate's head, thus baptizing each candidate by the same procedure. Later the Baptismal mode was somewhat changed in that the Elder would dip the baptismal water out of the bowl unto the head of the candidate as he pronounced the Baptismal words of the manual.

But in the last several years this method has been discontinued, and the cup is again being used by the Deacon in pouring the baptismal water into the palm of the Elder's hands, which are over the candidates head, and thus the Elder applies the water on the head of the candidate as he pronounces the Baptismal ritual, after which the Elder gives each one the hand of fellowship, and declares them a member of our congregation.

During the last 70 years our church has been a lighthouse, in that through its ministry has pointed the Way of Salvation and baptized 920 people.

Elder Jacob Stucky, who had also assisted in organizing our church, baptized the first candidates on December 19, 1886, since Rev. Flickinger was not ordained as Elder yet. In this group of candidates were Christian Albright, Christian P. Graber, Freni Schwartz, Freni Albright, Carolina Kaufman, Anna Stucky and Lena Goering.

On September 1, 1889, Elder Christian Kaufman baptized Jacob S. Schwartz, Jacob Albright, John Sutter, Joseph W. Krehbiel, Jacob Krehbiel, Marie Graber and Elizabeth Kaufman.

On April 8, 1891, Jacob Zerger, Peter A. Schwartz, Joseph Preheim, Andrew Goering, Peter J. Krehbiel, Jacob Krehbiel, Daniel E. Krehbiel, Anna A. Schwartz, Anna Zerger, Anna S. Schwartz, Freni Zerger and Katherina Graber were baptized, also by Elder Christian Kaufman; after which Rev. J. J. Flickinger, who was now an ordained Elder, instructed and baptized, as did all the other pastors during their respective terms here.

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## 29. THE CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR

In 1934, at the Jubilee, Harvey L. Krehbiel gave a report of the Christian Endeavor's activities up to that time, but since his report has been either lost or misplaced, and since no reports earlier than 1927 were available to me, I can draw only on my memory, and as I remember it, the C. E. was first started in our church about the year 1894. It carried on for a few years, after which it lapsed for a time, but was again revived in 1903, and has since continued until the present time.

To start with the C. E., programs were held on Sunday afternoons. This was changed, however, in March 1929, when it was decided to have them on Sunday evenings instead, and as far back as the writer can recall, the C. E. meetings were held every alternate Sunday.

In its early years every church member was considered a member of this society, until in 1930, when a resolution was passed to draft a constitution, and at the adoption of this constitution this was changed to a closed membership up to 30 years of age, with each member paying \$1.00 per annum as membership dues. About 1930 was also the transition period from the German language to the English in the rendering of its programs, as well as its reports and business meetings.

For many years the C. E. Society supported a Hindu child at \$30.00 per annum. And since 1948, when the Young People's Union purchased the retreat grounds, the local C. E. has been paying on that budget annually. It has built and paid for one cabin there. The name "Camp Mennoscah" was submitted by our member Arthur Waltner as the official name of the W. D. C. Camp grounds. Active members have hired out for one day's work, and have applied the proceeds towards paying for the material for building the cabin. In 1949 the C. E. Society rented the 80 acres donated to the church by R. J. and Emma Stucky for two years.

The following are some of the Presidents and Secretary-Treasurers that have served the C. E. Society since 1927.—

President	Secretary-Treasurer
Arthur Waltner	Edna Graber
Emil Krehbiel	Martha Graber
John Schrag	Anna Krehbiel
Philip J. Graber	Viola Albright
Edna Graber	Hilda Graber
Herman Albright	Hulda Graber
Waldo Flickinger	Adina Graber
Harvey L. Krehbiel	Helen Graber
Edwin E. Graber	Opal Albright
Albert Graber	Della Goering
Philip J. Stucky	Dorothy Goering
Frances Musselman	Ella B. Graber
Fred A. Krehbiel	Ruby Stucky
Irvin Graber	Selma Vogt
Arthur Schrag	Irene Huxman
Irvin Stucky	Florence Graber
Ted Graber	Josephine Schrag
Harry Flickinger	Stella Stucky

Victor Graber	Elaine Faire Graber
Gilbert Stucky	Glenna Krehbiel
Harry Krehbiel	Kathryn Stucky
Victor Krehbiel	Florence Flickner
Melvin Flickinger	Delmar Stucky
Harlan Krehbiel	

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**30. SEWING SOCIETY REPORT COVERING 1902-1934**  
(As Given October 14, 1934, at our 50th Anniversary by Mrs. P. P. Schrag  
Translated by J. A. Stucky)

Years and days are passing, yet the Lord's great commission still stands, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature!"

In 1902 the response was given by three sisters of our church to the mission call to support in a special way the Lord's work with prayer and gifts. Mrs. John J. Flickinger, Mrs. P. A. Graber and Mrs. Wm. Soft then had pledged by their signatures the support of this branch of mission work by prayer and a 10 cents member fee. This signed pledge was also handed to other sisters and two more joined by signing; so at the first meeting these five sisters were present and elected as their chairman Mrs. P. A. Graber, and the society that first day started with 50 cents in their treasury.

At that time missionary H. R. Voth, who was calling at the various churches in the interest of missions also came to our church and stressed the necessity of such work as these sisters had begun, and greatly encouraged them in their undertaking; so the membership soon grew to an active society of 20 participants, who gathered once a month on Sunday afternoon at the home of one of the sisters, until the new church of 1905 was completed where the sessions were then held. They meditated in the Word of God, and having brought their offerings, they planned how best to use this money in the Lord's work. As no sewing was done in those days, ready-made clothing and blankets were bought and given to the needy ones in our midst, as well as sent to the mission fields; however, no exact figures are available of all the clothing and offerings given, as the early records were destroyed or lost, except that in 1905 \$32.50 were sent to the orphanage at Palestine. The society carried on for about six years, when in 1908 under certain conditions its functions ceased. It is estimated that in those six years the society met 72 times, and their offerings in money amounted to about \$500.00, which was not bad for those days. From its founders only Mrs. Soft is still with us (1934), and of those joining later four sisters remain as of this date: Mrs. Anna Stucky and Mrs. Elizabeth Vogt of this church, and Mrs. Marie Kopper now of the Bethany Church, and Freni, Mrs. Christ Stucky now living in California.

Eleven years had elapsed since the society last met, when in the fall of 1919 Rev. J. B. Epp accepted the call of this church and revived it again. Its first session was held in the home of the Rev. Epps, where sister Epp was elected chairman. The meeting was opened by singing, prayer and reading of scripture, and the resolution was passed to aid the suffering and needy in Russia with the offerings and making of clothing, as the need was so great there at that time. It was also decided to meet every first Thursday of each month, and to have its business meeting at the annual meeting the first of the year. Rev. Epp then closed the meeting with remarks and prayer and the sisters contributed their gifts.

The society still carries on much in the same order today, except that the offerings in cash used to come from the members of the society, when in 1925 the offerings slowed down some, so it was decided to sell eats at the public sales of church members, and as this way of raising money soon proved unsatisfactory, the church decided to have one offering each month for the Sewing Society. The business meetings were also changed to the month of June, so as to be able to give a report to the Conference committee as to the activities of this society.

This mission sewing society has been active for 15 years, but because there is no record of the first three years it is hard to report on that except that 1150 lbs. used clothing were sent to Russia, and in these 15 years 168 sessions were held with an average of 15 sisters attending.





**Sewing Society Prior To 1934**

In the last 11 years from 1923 to 1934 the work was being done according to the listed program sent us by the officers of the General Conference Sewing Society. Gifts contributed by the members of our society in these 11 years were \$175.76; money taken in from public sales amounted to \$294.81; offerings through church collections were \$1183.52, and \$18.55 was contributed by Sunday school classes; thus bringing the total up to \$1,672.64, which the society used for benevolent purposes and passed on to mission fields. There were 917 pieces of clothing made, and 450 bought; 63 quilts were made and 887 lbs. used clothing were sent away, also 84 lbs. dried apples were sent away.

Five mission programs were instituted, and the following ministers and missionaries were present with our society in various sessions: Rev. J. J. Plennert of Hutchinson, Rev. H. R. Voth of Oklahoma, Rev. P. A. and Mrs. Penner of India, Sister, Mrs. Jonathan Schrag of China, and Rev, J. P. Sudermans of Arizona.

Gifts and clothing were sent to China, India, Germany, Russia, Canada, South America, Palestine, Montana, Oklahoma and Arizona, as well as many needy were also remembered in our home community. Sick visitations were made and flowers for funerals were given, and still the call for help is coming to the Society.

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### **31. SUMMARY OF SEWING SOCIETY ACTIVITIES SINCE 1934**

The Sewing Society has been carrying on in much the same way since 1934 as it has previous to that date, as reported at the Jubilee Anniversary by Mrs. P. P. Schrag.

The following are the names of some of the different officers that have served in one or more offices of the Society:

Hilda Graber	Mrs. B. J. Stucky	Mrs. Rudy Stucky
Mrs. P. P. Schrag	Mrs. S. M. Musselman	Miss Esther Schrag
Mrs. John H. Graber	Mrs. Al B. Graber	Miss Helen F. Graber
Hulda D. Graber	Mrs. Waldo Schrag	Miss Opal Krehbiel
Mrs. Carl Unruh	Mrs. P. P. Tschetter	Miss Mildred Albright
Mrs. B. A. Schwartz	Mrs. John Vogt	Mrs. Jonas Albright
Mrs. J. B. Epp	Mrs. Paul Voran	Mrs. Joe C. Graber, Jr.
Mrs. John C. Graber	Miss Dorothy Albright	Mrs. Milton Schwartz
Miss Florence Krehbiel	Mrs. P. P. Krehbiel	Miss Mathilda Graber
Mrs. Phil J. Stucky	Mrs. Ed Schwartz	Miss Florence E. Graber
Mrs. J. W. Lorentz	Mrs. Howard Schrag	Mrs. Ed H. Graber
Miss Ida Schrag	Miss Velma Schwartz	Mrs. Harvey Waltner
Mrs. Herman Krehbiel	Mrs. H. G. Nyce	Miss Emma Schwartz
Miss Anna B. Graber	Mrs. Art Schrag	Mrs. Martin Stucky
Miss Ella B. Graber	Mrs. Eli Albright	Mrs. Dan Ratzlaff

Miss Mary Stucky

Mrs. Ed R. Krehbiel

Mrs. Dan Goerin

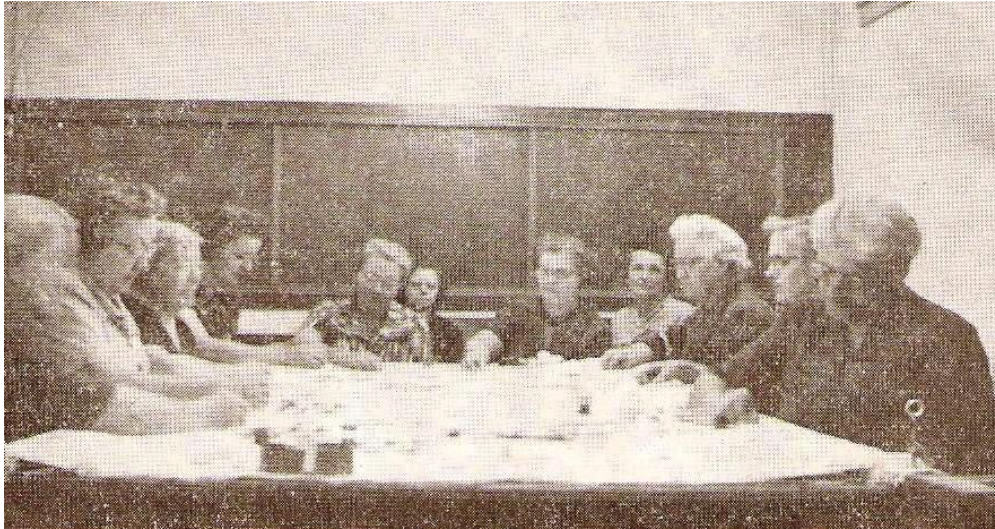
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**Those in the relief canning committee from time to time.**

Mrs. H. P. Graber  
Mrs. P. P. Tschetter  
Mrs. Ed Schwartz  
Mrs. John C. Graber  
Mrs. P. P. Schrag  
Mrs. Albert B. Graber

Mrs. Dan Ratzlaff  
Mrs. Jonas Albright  
Mrs. Art Waltner  
Mrs. Lawrence Voran  
Mrs. Paul Voran  
Mrs. P. J. Goering

Mrs. Emil Krehbiel  
Mrs. Amos Flickinger  
Mrs. Herman Krehbiel  
Mrs. Harvey D. Krehbiel  
Mrs. Joe C. Graber  
Mrs. Herman D. Graber



Sewing Society 1953

The following are some of the projects to the different branches of relief the Society has contributed to since 1927:

**IN MONEY**

for X-ray Equipment to China hospital  
for news and notes  
to Hateville, Arizona  
to Janjigir, India  
to the American Indians  
for hospital supplies to Champa, India  
to Floyd, an orphan in Araibi, Arizona  
to Bible woman, Li Yiu Hsian  
to Rev. Fast, Rev. and Mrs. P. J. Wiens  
to Chicago's poor, and to the Red Cross  
to Mrs. Frieda Regier Entz for missions  
to Leonard Wiebe's, Moen Copi, Arizona  
to furnish room at Bethel Hospital  
to Paraguay and Brazil  
to Cook County Hospital, Chicago  
to Columbia, S. America's Children's Home  
for Care packages to M. C. C.  
to help pay expenses of one of our girls who helped in the "Go Ye Mission"  
for migrant work; to Bethel Hospital, and to "Go Ye Mission"  
to help buy a car for Miss Elsa E. Grantland in N. Carolina  
for mountain work in Kentucky and N. Carolina  
to Dr. P. A. Penners and to Rev. P. H. Richerts  
to Selma Unruh and Anna Liechty in Africa  
for Camp packs  
for Bibles in India

for trip for Miss Justina Schmidt  
 for draperies for Bethel Memorial Hall  
 for day nursery in Hutchinson  
 for washing machine in Paraguay Hospital  
 to Missionary Coens, and Rev. J. B. Edigers  
 to Rev. P. W. Penners for India Famine Relief  
 to Peace Committee, and to American Bible Society  
 for repair work at Altoona, Pennsylvania Mennonite Church  
 for Sunday school supplies to Rev. J. B. Ediger's station at Clinton, Okla.  
 \$3.00 to \$5.00 monthly for each needy C. P. S. boy from our church  
 to Poland, Belgium and the Netherlands for relief  
 for new mission stations in Africa and S. America  
 to widow in Canada, and to Miss Elizabeth Foth, Brooklyn, N. Y.  
 to missionary H. J. Browns for China missions  
 to Miss Brown, and to Kai Chu, China  
 to Jubilee fund  
 gifts to Mrs. J. B. Epp, Mrs. P. J. Wiens, and missionary Linsheids; also to Mrs. J. W. Lorenz, Mrs. S. M. Musselman and to Mrs. F. J. Isaaks, Champa, India

#### **MONEY AND GOODS**

to Mrs. Musselman, Mrs. Bahnmann and to Rev. J. P. Suderman's Hopi Indians  
 to Mennonite Central Committee for food and medical supplies in C. P. S. camps  
 to needy in our church  
 to Bushy, Montana station  
 to Rev. Erwin Wedels in Jackson, Mississippi  
 canned goods and gifts to Mrs. Florence Kelley  
 to missionary Heathershaws, Africa, also bandages  
 to Basna, India

#### **OTHER ARTICLES**

goods to Waldo Petters, Ashland, Montana, and to Rev. David Toews, Canada  
 to Waldenian people in Italy, and to Fred Johnson station, Tuba City Arizona  
 to support of baby orphan, and maternity ward for China mothers  
 used clothing to Akron, Pa., for Colo. Springs and Russian relief  
 garments to Canada, and to Greek war relief,  
 goods to Carl Wahlstedts; to Lame Deer, Montana and Sardis, British Columbia  
 articles and camp packs to Fort Collins Colorado  
 curtains and other goods to Williard Grabers camp, Weeping Waters, Nebr.  
 soap for relief to Newton, and pillows to sister Frieda, Bethel Hospital  
 quilt blocks to American Indians at Montana and Arizona  
 bicycle for Bible woman, and cookies to Mrs. J. R. Doerksen  
 300 cups for church kitchen; towels for Bethel Dining Hall  
 goods to Grace Children's Home, Henderson, Nebraska  
 shoes and clothing to Besemer family in Germany  
 quilt patches to Maria Buller for Birney, Montana Indian school  
 articles to Hill City C. P. S. camp; comforts and articles to European relief.

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### **32. SPECIAL MEETINGS**

The Pretty Prairie Mennonite congregation has always believed in Evangelistic meetings, as many of our early church leaders were converted at Evangelistic meetings in South Dakota.

At the dedication of our previous edifice in 1905 Rev. J. Hirschler and Rev. Jacob Quiring were the guest speakers. Rev. Quiring was liked so well that he was engaged for Evangelistic meetings on several different occasions, and as result our congregation received much spiritual food from those services, and many still remember the inspiration received from the German hymns, "O that Will be Glory," "O that Thou Wouldst believe" and many others.

In 1906 Rev. P. E. Penner held services here that also were very profitable in that he taught by outline the different dispensations in God's plan.

On May 23, 1920 our church was host to one of the first Mennonite Bible Conferences ever held, when a 2-day program was

carried out with a number of speakers participating, among whom were the Reverends J. J. Balzer, W. S. Gottshall, P. H. Richert, Gustav Enns and C. H. Friesen. Rev. Balzer spoke daily using a Clarence Larkin "Eternity to Eternity" chart, which was reproduced on a 3' x 12' wallboard, and used to illustrate in teaching the dispensational Bible messages. The pre-millennium view was expounded. All of these messages were in the German language. Rev. J. J. Balzer's messages were then printed in book form entitled, "A Short Review of God's Plan of Salvation as Recorded in The Holy Scriptures." We had overflowing crowds therefore a large tent was erected beside our church building. Our pastor Rev. J. B. Epp presided over these meetings, and we had a wonderful time in studying God's Word.

In October 1924, our church had the privilege of being host to the Western District Conference, and because of insufficient room in our church building the conference meetings were held at the high school auditorium. Rev. Arno C. Gaebelein, D. D., was the guest speaker, who spoke every evening, and most ministers from this conference then availed themselves of the opportunity to hear his expositions.

In 1925, Rev. J. J. Reimer served us with Bible teaching services, which also proved very helpful.

Then Rev. Theo. H. Epp was engaged for revival meetings in 1938, which were very inspiring, and as a result many of our young people made decisions for the Lord with a number of them having gone into full-time service. He again served us in 1951 with heartening results.

In 1946, Rev. Homer Leisy was in our midst, again presenting the Clarence Larkin charts and his own free-hand religious cartoons; all of which were to our spiritual up building.

Some of the other ministers, besides our standing pastors, also helping to mold our lives by serving us from time to time, were the Reverends John J. Schrag, P. R. Aeshelman, John Roth, P. W. Unruh, H. D. Burkholder, W. M. Dettweiler, P. R. Schroeder, H. P. Fast, P. H. Richert, J. H. Schultz, P. I. Ramseyer, M. M. Horsch, Erland Waltner, Walter H. McDowell, Freeman Schwartz, Andrew Shelly, W. K. Claassen, and Dr's A. Warkentin and Robert R. Fritsh, the Gaddis-Moser party, Rev. D. J. Unruh, and possibly others.

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### 33. VACATIONAL BIBLE SCHOOL

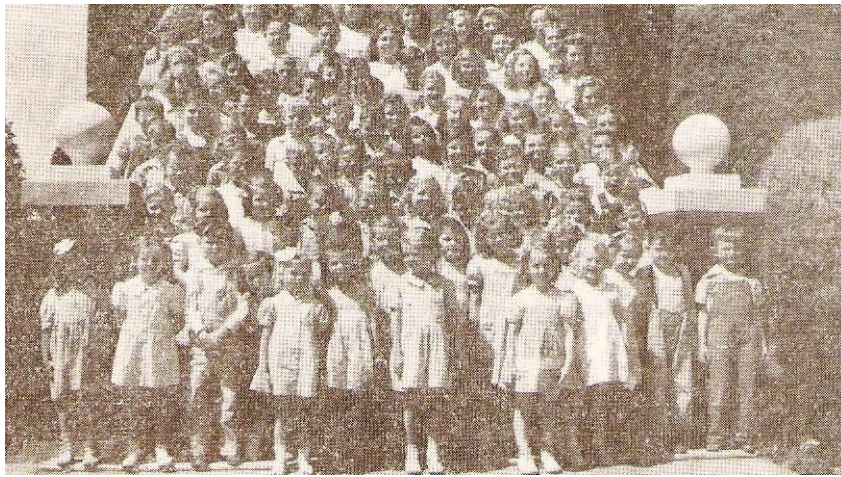
The first vacational Bible school was started about 1886, and although it was conducted altogether in the German language, every child was trained in Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar, and some multiplication, besides the study of Church History, Bible stories, Scripture verse memorizing and singing.

It was held in the first church building, which was remodeled from the store building that was bought and moved here. The seats were common benches about eight feet long, and long tables were placed between two benches which were used as a desk or study table. The boys and girls were segregated, boys on one bench, and girls on another, facing each other at the tables. For reciting the students of different classes were called forward, who stood in a row, and recited orally. Carl Preheim was the first teacher, Rev. J.J. Flickinger was next, and the Jacob Graber.

In 1891, when the new church building was being erected, after the store building proved too small, Bible school was conducted in the different district school buildings in the community as Springvale, Savage, and Albion. Each district elected a school board for this purpose, whose duty it was to hire a teacher and arrange for school. Usually a male teacher was employed, who perhaps was better educated and stricter disciplinarian of the older boys and girls. After the turn of the century, however, more women teachers were being hired, and when no teacher was available in our midst the Buhler and Inman communities would have someone to fill the need. The salary was usually agreed upon by the teacher and school board, and divided equally between the number of children attending school, which was paid by their parents.

Bible school was opened mornings with scripture reading, Bible verse memorizing, prayer and singing. Textbooks were the A B C Fiebel, Witter's 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Readers, Copy book for Penmanship, Sprachlehre (grammar), and Zahn's or Zuck's Bible Stories. The Perle, Kleine Palme and other gospel song books were used. At first slates were more extensively used than paper. At first when the district schools were conducted only six months, the Bible school was held two months; but when the district schools were prolonged to eight months, the Bible school was shortened to six weeks, and now since the district schools have consolidated and run a 9-month term, we have only two weeks of Bible school.





VACATIONAL BIBLE SCHOOL 1946

Some of the German Bible school teachers besides the above named were J. P. O. Graber, C. P. Froese, Jake Martens, H. A. Bachman, ? Duerksen, John Barkman, Adolph Wagner, J. Regier, Jacob Dirks, Jacob Froese, John Soft, B. J. Stucky, Mrs. B. A. Schwartz, Arnold Ewert, Ray Kaufman, Elizabeth Cornelsen, Kathryn and Marie Esau and Lorena Schwartz.

Since 1934 the vacation Bible school has been conducted mostly in the English language and is held in the church basement under the auspices of the pastor and deacons with four or five instructors, and a student membership of up to 100.

The following are some of the teachers that have taught Bible school since it has been conducted in the English language:

Miss Sadie Wedel  
 Miss Alida Schmidt  
 Rev. J. W. Lorenz  
 Mrs. Howard G. Nyce  
 Mrs. Al B. Graber  
 Mrs. Frieda Schrag

Mrs. Virgil Flickinger  
 Miss Anna Graber  
 Miss Ella Graber  
 Miss Elma Jansen  
 Miss Ruth Goering  
 Miss Lucy Stucky

Miss Fern Krehbiel  
 Miss Evelyn Voran  
 Miss Glenna Krehbiel  
 Rev. P. P. Tschetter  
 Calvin Flickinger  
 Melvin Flickinger

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### 34. PARSONAGE OF THE FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH

No parsonage was needed until 1919, because of the fact that the first two ministers that had served our congregation were products from our own church, and owned their own homes.

In 1919, however, when the first outside minister was called to serve our congregation, namely Rev. J. B. Epp, it was necessary to secure a parsonage, so a 4-room house was bought in Pretty Prairie for the sum of \$1,500.00. This served as a parsonage until 1922 when Rev. N. W. Bahnmann took charge of our church. And as they were blessed with a large family, this parsonage proved inadequate, and our congregation decided to sell this 4-room house and build a new and larger one. More ground was needed for a building site, John J. Graber graciously donated one acre of ground for this purpose to the parsonage fund, which joined our church property on the west side. A 30 x 32, 2-story, 8-room house was then built on this tract with an expenditure of \$4,300.00. Besides Rev. Bahnmann, it served as a home for Rev. Lorenz, Rev. Musselmanns and Rev. Tschetter.

In 1948, however, when Dr. Howard G. Nyce answered the call to the pastorate, and as the parsonage was in need of repair, the congregation decided to move it to Pretty Prairie, whereupon Dr. and Mrs. B. J. Stucky donated to the church fund a 3-lot tract on Maple Street for a location, on which it was moved, enlarged, modernized and reconditioned at an outlay of \$8,000.00.

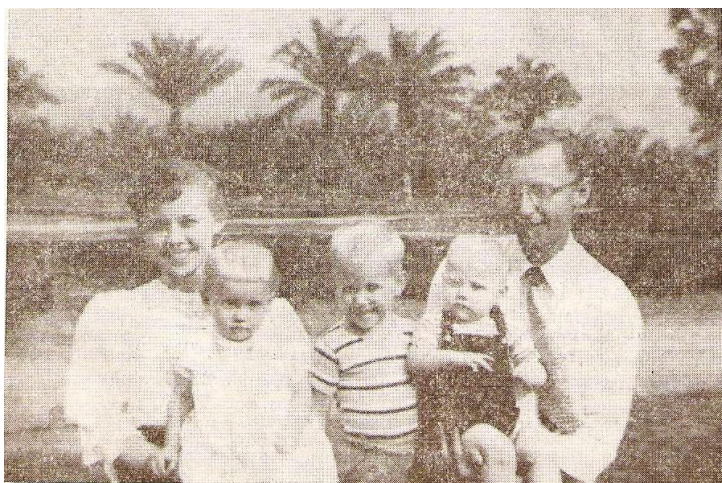
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**35. MEMBERS AND FORMER MEMBERS IN CHRISTIAN SERVICE**

**MISSIONARIES**



Rev. and Mrs. James Heathershaw were former missionaries to Africa under the Sudan Interior Mission. They returned the early part of 1949



Rev. and Mrs. Harold Graber are missionaries in the Kasai District, Congo Belge, Africa, under the Congo Inland Mission Board



**MISS ELSIE WINSINGER IS A MISSIONARY  
IN FRENCH WEST AFRICA, UNDER THE  
GOSPEL MISSIONARY UNION**





Left MISS MARY SCHRAG, R. N., IS A MISSIONARY IN CHAMPA, MIDDLE PROVINCE, INDIA, UNDER THE GENERAL CONFERENCE MENNONITE MISSION BOARD

Right MISS AMY WINSINGER LEFT AS MISSIONARY TO BRAZIL, SOUTH AMERICA UNDER THE BRAZIL GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP MISSION.

Rev. and Mrs. Calvin Flickinger were to leave as missionaries to Columbia, South America, under the General Conference Mennonite Mission Board, but since the door has been closed, future plans are as yet indefinite. Sorry, no appropriate picture available.

Rev. and Mrs. Peter Voran are missionaries under the General Conference Mennonite Mission Board.

Rev. and Mrs. Carl O. Wahlstadt are Missionaries at Emmanuel Bible Camp Barbourville, Ky. Mrs. Wahlstadt is the former Wilma Ratzlaff, a former member of this church.

#### PASTORS

Rev. Waldo Flickinger is Pastor of the Saron Mennonite Church Orienta, Oklahoma.



PASTOR AND 3-MEMBER DEACON BOARD 1950

Rev. John G. Graber, Th. D., is Pastor of the Emmanuel Mennonite Church, Los Angeles, California.

Rev. Victor Graber is Pastor of the Garden Township Mennonite Church, Hesston, Kansas.

Rev. Waldo Kaufman is Pastor of the Bethel Mennonite Church, Hydro, Oklahoma.

Rev. Boyd Bonebrake is Pastor of the Zion Mennonite Church, Kingman, Kansas.

Rev. Richard Ratzlaff is Pastor of the Brighton Mennonite Church, Chicago, Ill.

Rev. LeRoy J. Stucky is at present a student at Grace College, Winona Lake, Indiana.

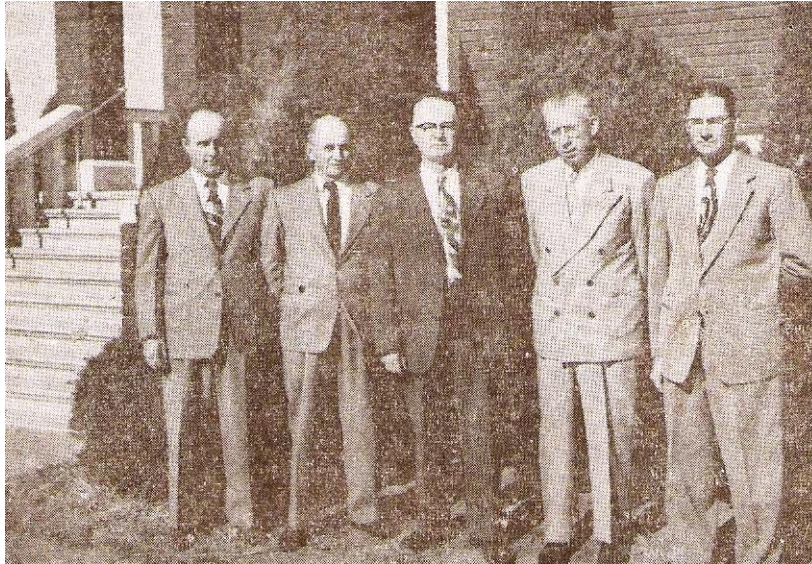
Rev. Ervin Albrecht is Pastor of the Bethel Mennonite Church, Fortuna, Missouri.

Rev. Harry Albrecht is Pastor of the Mennonite Church, Portland, Oregon.

Rev. Paul Tschetter is Pastor of the Butterfield Mennonite Church, Butterfield, Minnesota.

Rev. Richard Tschetter is Pastor of the Herold Mennonite Church, Cordell, Oklahoma





1954 5-MEMBER BOARD OF DEACONS  
LEFT TO RIGHT: GILBERT STUCKY, IRVAN KREHBIEL, HERMAN D. GRABER  
SAM SCHRAG AND EMIL KREHBIEL

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INSTRUCTORS

John Schrag is instructor at Grace Bible Institute, Omaha, Nebraska. Eldon W. Graber, Ph.D., is instructor at Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas.

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EDITOR

Menno Schrag is Editor of the Mennonite Weekly Review, Newton, Kansas,

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MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE



WILLARD A. SCHRAG  
HOME MISSION WORK, PAINT ROCK  
NORTH CAROLINA



MRS. WILLARD SCHRAG, R. N  
HOME MISSION WORK, PAINT ROCK  
NORTH CAROLINA



Willard A. Schrag was in South America under the M. C. C., now Mr. and Mrs. Schrag are serving under the Home Mission Board, Paint Rock, North Carolina.

Mr. and Mrs. Virgil Flickinger served in Italy under the M. C. C.

Darrel Albright served in South America under the M. C. C.

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**36. BRETHREN WHO SERVED IN THE DIFFERENT CAPACITIES  
OF OUR CHURCH SINCE 1903**

**No Data Available Before 1903. (Some Having Served More than  
One Term)**

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**Directors of Church Board**

Christian Graber  
Jacob Krehbiel  
John J. Graber  
Joe C. Graber

Jacob K. Graber  
Peter A. Graber  
John Goering  
Jacob A. Schwartz

John C. Kaufman  
Peter Preheim  
Jacob B. Graber  
Jonas A. Stucky

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**Since 1920 Board of Deacons**

John J. Graber  
Jacob A. Schwartz  
Jacob J. Graber  
Jacob B. Graber  
Jonas A. Stucky  
Rev. John J. Flickinger  
Amos Flickinger  
Peter J. Albright

Jacob K. Graber  
Rudolph J. Stucky  
Andrew H. Schrag  
Emil Flickinger  
Jacob G. Graber  
Herman D. Graber  
Dan J. Ratzlaff  
Henry P. Graber

Joe W. Krehbiel  
Art Waltner  
Irvin Krehbiel  
Emil Krehbiel  
Ben A. Schrag  
Gilbert Stucky  
Sam Schrag

Peter W. Kaufman  
Jacob Krehbiel  
Peter A. Schwartz  
Jacob A. Schwartz  
Peter J. Graber  
Ben A. Schwartz  
Chris D. Krehbiel  
Peter Preheim  
Jonas A. Stucky  
Eli K. Stucky

---

**Moderators Since 1903**  
Dr. B. J. Stucky  
Jacob L. Goering  
H. D. Graber  
Emil Flickinger  
Amos J. Flickinger  
Ed Schwartz  
John H. Graber  
Felix Graber  
Waldo Flickinger  
Rev. J. B. Epp

Jacob B. Graber  
Peter J. Albright  
Art Waltner  
Walter W. Graber  
Henry P. Graber  
Emil Krehbiel  
Joe W. Krehbiel  
Edwin E. Graber

Jacob Preheim  
John R. Krehbiel  
Felix Graber  
Joe P. A. Stucky  
Peter D. A. Graber  
Eli K. Stucky  
Amos J. Flickinger

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**Secretary Since 1903**  
John H. Graber  
Chris P. Graber  
Herman D. Graber  
Chris D. Krehbiel  
Jonas W. Graber  
Peter A. Schwartz  
Walter W. Graber

Emil Krehbiel  
Emil Flickinger  
Dan Schrag  
Ed Schwartz  
Peter .I. Goering  
Edwin E. Graber  
Melvin Flickinger.

John T. Albright  
Jacob G. Graber  
Andrew H. Schrag  
John H. Graber  
Jacob B. Graber  
John P. Goering  
Joe P. A. Stucky  
Peter A. Schwartz

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**Trustees Since 1920**  
Joe M. Graber  
Eli K. Stucky  
Albert A. Kaufman  
Arthur J. Krehbiel  
Jonas H. Schwartz  
Paul J. Voran  
Emil Krehbiel  
Eli Albright

Ed P. Graber  
Peter J. Goering  
Ed W. Graber  
Fred A. Krehbiel  
Harvey L. Krehbiel  
Edwin J. Goering  
Jonas Albright

Joe P. A. Stucky  
Jonathan R. Goering  
John P. Goering  
Peter J. Krehbiel  
J. R. Krehbiel  
Emil C. Graber  
Peter H. Graber  
John T. Albright  
Jacob J. Graber

Art Waltner  
Waldo Flickinger  
Emil Krehbiel  
Edwin E. Graber  
Henry P. Graber  
Ed H. Graber

John R. Graber  
Jacob A. Schwartz  
Peter J. Graber

Emil Flickinger  
John R. Krehbiel  
John B. Graber  
Jacob A. Schwartz

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**Arbitration Com Since 1914**

Emil Flickinger  
John Albright  
P. J. Albright  
Henry P. Graber  
Jonas O. Krehbiel  
H. D. Graber  
Jacob B. Graber  
Eli K. Stucky  
Dan J. Ratzlaff

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**Peace and Relief Committee Since 1940**

Gilbert Stucky  
Harvey L. Krehbiel  
Fred H. Krehbiel  
Herman A. Krehbiel  
Ted Graber  
Albert B. Graber

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**Church Building Committee of 1905**

John Goering  
Peter A. Graber  
Andrew Schwartz

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**Church Building Committee of 1927**

Peter J. Krehbiel  
Eli K. Stucky  
Joe J. Kaufman  
Jacob Soft

Ben P. O. Graber  
Ben A. Schrag  
Jacob G. Graber  
Chris P. Graber  
Phillip J. Stucky  
Geo. Schroeder Joe  
C. Graber, Jr.  
Alvin Albright  
Dan B. Schrag

Joe C. Graber  
Phil. H. Stucky  
Harry Krehbiel  
Willard Wedel

Rev. J. J. Flickinger  
John J. D. Graber  
Christian Graber

John J. Vogt  
Peter C. Graber

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**37. MEN IN GOVERNMENT SERVICE  
IN WORLD WAR I**

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**In Non-Combat or C. P. S.**

- |                        |                     |
|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Henry Vogt          | 5. Dr. B. J. Stucky |
| 2. Henry S. Stucky     | 6. Chris Graber     |
| 3. Rudolph Stucky      | 7. Jonas Vogt       |
| 4. Rudolph J. Schwartz | 8. Dave Krehbiel    |

**In Regular**

1. Ervin Albright
2. Jonas C. Albright

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**IN WORLD WAR II****In Non-Combat or C. P. S.**

- |                      |                        |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Virgil Flickinger  | 9 * Victor Huxman      |
| 2 * Harry .Krehbiel  | 10 * Willard Graber    |
| 3 * Philip H. Stucky | 11 Elmer Goering       |
| 4 Harvey Stucky      | 12 * Edwin V. Krehbiel |
| 5 Harold Graber      | 13 Delmar Krehbiel     |
| 6 Willard Schrag     | 14 Melvin Flickinger   |
| 7 Homer Albright     | 15 Victor E. Graber    |
| 8 Joe Krehbiel       | 16 Marvin Schwartz     |

**In the Regular Army**

- |                      |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Richard Goering    | 14 Elmer Paul Stucky  |
| 2 Delmar E. Flickner | 15 Harvey D. Flickner |
| 3 Marvin L. Huxman   | 16 (M) Victor Goering |

4	Allen Gene Schwartz	17	Dr. Harold J. Graber
5	* Clarence D. Stucky	18	Raymond J. Kaufman
6	Dr. Milo Stucky	19	Walter E. Schwartz
7	Richard Graber	20	* Chester Unruh
8	* Paul Borth	21	Victor Unruh
9	* Clarence D. Flickner	22	Victor H. Kaufman
10	++ Everett Gene Albright	23	Walter H. Krehbiel
11	* John L. Graber	24	Eugene Schroeder
12	(G) Harvey H. Graber	25	(K) Alvin Graber
13	Lawrence Schwartz		

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### KOREAN WAR AND AFTER

#### In I-W Service

1. \* Myron Voran
2. Elmer Schrag
3. Chester Flickinger
4. \* Darrel Albright
5. Herbert Schrag
6. \* Claire Graber
7. \* Jesse Krehbiel
8. Milford Ratzlaff
9. Victor Schrag
10. \* Dean Schrag
11. Orval Schwartz
12. Merlin Krehbiel
13. \* Robert Vogt
14. \* Homer Graber

#### In Military Service

1. \* Wilbur Graber
2. Wilbur Goering
3. La Verne Schrag.
4. Alvin Huxman
5. Vern Albright
6. \* Ted Flickinger
7. Vern Graber
8. \* Ed Kaufman
9. \* Leo Vern Krehbiel
10. \* Vern Schroeder
11. Kenneth Schwartz
12. Victor Zerger
13. Robert Graber

\* Are married

(M) Missing in action

(G) German prisoner

++ Not member of church

(K) Killed in plane crash in Africa February 23, 1943

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### 38. WEDDING CUSTOMS

Marriage is to be in the Lord. It is the oldest institution and divinely ordained; made for better or worse-until death do us part. Formerly marriages were discouraged during the Lenten season, and those that married outsiders forfeited their membership.

In the old country the prospective bride groom would send the deacon or steckelman to the home of the bride-to-be to ask for their daughter's hand, usually knowing beforehand that the answer would be favorable. The steckelman service, however, was later discontinued.

With the consent of both parents the wedding date was decided upon, and the minister was consulted as to whether such date was open, and also to officially announce it, and request the prayers of the congregation.

No cosmetics were known then, as the girls were naturally pretty, and no wedding rings or jewelry were worn at first, as it was worldly to wear them.

The wedding dress was tailor-made by the bride or by a seamstress. It was ankle length with fitted blouse with long sleeves puffed at the shoulder, and with snug elbow to wrist fit. The skirt was gathered or flared, with or without bustle in back; and the shoes were above ankle styles with buttons. The bride wore her long hair in up-do style with twisted or braided knot adorned with an artificial corsage.

The groom was attired in a stand-up or high turn back celluloid collar and cuffs with fancy collar and cuff buttons. Balloon bottom trousers were worn, and a corsage like that adorning the bride's hair was worn on the coat lapel.

Come the wedding day, the bridal pair were chauffeured to the church for the ceremony in a 3-seated spring wagon drawn by a well-matched team. The whip was decorated with ribbons, and the harness also with ribbons and with celluloid rings. The

driver of the spring wagon was the best man, who occupied the front seat with the brides-maid. The gent and maid-of-honor took the back seat, while the prospective bride and groom rode the middle seat. They marched to the altar in like fashion—the best man and brides-maid preceding the wedding couple, with the gent and maid-of-honor following.

The nuptial tie was preceded by a long sermon in which a number of ministers took part, and it was usually a recital of favorite Biblical wedding scenes: closing with the admonition that the bridal pair take the Lord as guide into their home life. After the exchange of vows, and having been pronounced man and wife, which was followed by a congregational song, they left the church building in the same order as they had entered. They mounted the spring wagon and drove away with the crack of the whip to the place of the reception. Occasionally they met a surprising episode of a well-wisher succeeded in sneaking away a dish, he would slam it to the floor at the newly-weds feet with a Russian salute.

The whole congregation was usually present at the church for the ceremony, and as the wedding meal had been prepared beforehand at the home of the bride, whose father, after the ceremony, formally invited everyone present to the reception consisting of a fatted calf, beans, potatoes, gravy, home-baked bread and cake, with coffee or lemonade. The flour and other ingredients had been portioned out to friends and relatives, prior to the wedding, who did the baking and cooking. All available house space, as well as sheds, and other buildings were utilized as dining rooms with tables and benches where all enjoyed a warm, sociable meal. All guests brought practical gifts to help start the newly-weds in keeping house. The day after the wedding all the cooks, ushers etc, came back for a general clean-up, and a second meal. And as no honeymoon was taken then, the married couple started to keep house as soon as they could get the necessary items.

Since the building of this brick edifice with full basement the wedding reception has been held in the church basement instead of in the homes, and as the congregation has also grown considerably, only the nearest relatives and friends are now invited. However, amusing or romantic some of these customs may seem, the marriage vows were held sacred for life. Proof—that for almost a half century our home and church life was not marred by a single divorce.

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### 39. FUNERAL CUSTOMS OF THE PIONEERS

In the early days when death entered a home there was no undertaker called; and as there was no embalming done at that time, burial had to be made as soon as arrangements could be completed. Relatives and friends washed, dressed and groomed the body until someone gifted in that art made a coffin. These were fitted with a lid, and were wider at the head end. Some were painted, others were not. Usually Peter W. Kaufman or Christian Graber were called upon to make the coffin, with possibly others who would donated their skill in this art.

About 1890 ready-made caskets were already bought and were from \$15.00 to \$25.00, and later, about 1916 they ranged in price from \$25.00 to \$50.00.

Usually four boys of the relatives or friends were engaged to dig the grave and also cover the mound. Now it is being done by outside help for \$25.00.

The pallbearers then, as now were usually picked by the immediate family from relatives to convey the body into the church for funeral services and then from the church to the cemetery for burial, with the exception that today the body is taken from the church to the cemetery in the hearse.

The wagon or spring wagon served as a hearse until about 1914 when the automobile became the common carrier, undertakers were also being employed. To the writer's knowledge there were no burial permits required in those days.

While the body was in the home the lights were kept burning all night and the young people gathered for wake night and sang songs of comfort and farewell.

Preaching and viewing of the body in the church, and the blessing at the graveside preceded by a short service, and viewing of the body in the home were always practiced, unless decomposition had set in to the extent that made it undesirable. No flowers were bought; the only bouquets were comforting words to the bereaved.

The casket was lowered into the open grave, without a vault, by two ropes, the congregation remained at the graveside and sang appropriate songs while the dirt was being filled in, until the mound was completed and the pastor had committed the remains to God in prayer and pronounced the benediction.

The question never entered the mind, whether or not to leave the ring on the finger, as no rings were being worn then, and the only insurance carried then was that with the Lord.



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#### 40. THE CEMETERY

The transaction for the Pretty Prairie church grounds, including the cemetery was completed in the latter part of 1884, as the cemetery was needed immediately. The deeds were drawn up and recorded later. According to the records in the Reno County Courthouse in Hutchinson, Kansas, it is recorded as, "The Mennonite Church in Albion Township."

Since there were no lots staked out in our cemetery at first, the burial of adults began grave to grave, in a row, starting from the north end, coming southward on the west side of center driveway; the children were buried the same way in the next row on the west side of the adult graves. The first lots were staked out about 1900, with more in 1918.

It is impossible to correctly identify the resting places of the earliest pioneers, as there were no permanent markers placed at their graves.

I will try to give a few of the earliest deceased, but I cannot positively establish the order or date of their passing. Jacob Senner, Sr., died in 1884, and was the first adult burial here. Marie, wife of Joe P. Graber, died on July 7, 1885. Elizabeth, wife of John Senner, whose death date is not known, was believed to have been the second or third burial. Freni, age 7, daughter of Joe J. Zerger, died of burns on March 5, 1885, and her father Joe J. Zerger died on April 8, 1885. Katherine, Mrs. John Stucky, died in January 1886, and Anna, Mrs. Jacob Kaufman also died the same year. Then there were also a number of children that died within the first two or three years.

Burial places then as now were free to church members only. Those that take out their church letters, or cancel their membership, forfeit their right to bury here, with the exception that former members may be granted this right by special arrangements.

The first sextant was John J. Graber, later were Ben A. Schwartz and John H. Graber, and now Milton Schwartz is our sextant. Pete Schrag formally took care of our cemetery, and now Mr. Tabor is hired to keep ours, as well as other cemeteries clean, besides digging graves for a specified fee. To date there are approximately 366 graves in God's acre.

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#### 41. BETHEL COLLEGE FELLOWSHIP

The duty of this organization is to stimulate good will, and to solicit funds for the college. The Zion, Bethany and Arlington Churches in conjunction with our church sponsor a Fellowship Banquet annually with a program in the interest of the school.

The following are some of the men who served in this committee since about 1940—

1.	Albert B. Graber	8	David J. Krehbiel
2.	John H. Graber	9	Milton Stucky
3.	Ed W. Graber	10	Robert Krehbiel
4.	Fred H. Krehbiel	11	Edwin E. Graber
5.	Art Waltner	12	Frank Quiring
6.	Joe M. Graber	13	Lawrence Voran
7.	Ben J. Krehbiel		

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#### 42. RELIEF CONTRIBUTIONS

"Cast your bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days." Eccl. 11:1.

Since complete records are not available, the following sum up in a general way some of the relief projects that our church contributed to in money, and in other ways at various times.

During the '90's our church participated in the sending of a shipload of corn to starving India, and in 1921 we sent a Fordson tractor to the Russian Mennonites. In 1924 a carload of heifers were sent to the needy Mennonites in Mexico, and at various times we sent new and used clothing to sufferers in Russia, Austria, Germany and Canada of which 1400 lbs. were sent at one time and 800 lbs. at another. Also over \$1,000.00 worth of food drafts were sent to needy Mennonite families in Russia from 1922 – 1925. At other times we made contributions to wheat and flour drives as well as meat and other foods which were given for M. C. C. distribution to needy people in various lands.

In recent years our church also participated in sending used implements, wagons, etc., to South America, and work and money was donated to flood and tornado victims in different places during the last few years.

The following are some of the relief offerings of recent years —

1920	\$2,853.11	1942	\$1,055.47	1949	\$2,188.32
1921	1,963.73	1943	2,571.41	1950	3,639.89
1922	1,856.68	1944	4,116.10	1951	3,983.17
1923	335.85	1945	3,562.30	1952	1,827.82
1924	554.82	1946	7,699.06	1953	3,179.36
1926	2,109.06	1947	4,955.45	1954	1,782.53
		1948	1,805.37		

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### 43. MISSION OFFERINGS

Mission work has at least three aspects—GO—GIVE--PRAY! In order to send out missionaries we must also pray and give. The following are a few of the records available of our church offerings:

Total per Annum					
1920	\$4,063.06	1941	\$6,521.56	1949	\$8,047.65
1921	4,383.79	1942	8,234.65	1950	8,219.42
1922	2,275.74	1943	7,276.92	1951	8,763.16
1923	1,229.72	1944	10,195.48	1952	12,914.00
1924	1,259.19	1945	7,737.46	1953	7,795.05
1925	1,874.77	1946	7,846.74	1954	11,898.87
1926	1,528.29	1947	10,213.20		
		1948	9,929.28		

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#### Harvest Mission Festival Offerings, 1948-1954

1948	\$ 5,630.28	1951	\$ 6,666.35	1954	\$ 7,292.75
1949	5,807.13	1952	8,175.70		
1950	6,121.37	1953	6,130.35		

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### 44. OUR CHURCH HISTORY IN A NUT SHELL

1872—Andreas Schrag, a layman, was the delegate of the Swiss group to spy out America as a new frontier for settlement: he chose South Dakota.

1873—Andreas Schrag, while inspecting America, asked for assistance to help bring our poorer people across from Russia. John F. Funk, Secretary of the Mennonite Board of Guardians, came to his aid by promising him between \$6,000.00 and \$8,000.00 to help families with insufficient funds on a loan basis.

1874—It cost each family 50 rubles plus legal expense to secure a passport.

1874—The cost of a ticket per person to travel to America was \$80.00.

1874—Seventy-three cents per ruble was received in the monetary exchange in New York.

1874—Andrew Schwartz walked a distance of about 50 miles to carry 500 rubles from Horodish to Kotosufka, which money was used to pay expenses for legal services required to get the passports.

1874—The first group of 10 families left Russia on April 10; 53 more families left Horodish and Waldheim in July, and arrived in Yankton, S. Dakota in August.

1874—Seventy-three families left Kotosufka on August 6, and arrived at New York on September 3, and while at Castle Garden, N. Y., they were induced to change their destination and settle in McPherson County, Kansas, instead of Yankton, S. Dakota.

1874—The mass migration of Mennonite families from Russia to America, 136 families out of the 6400 that came were Swiss Wolynians.

1874—Except for the assistance of the Mennonite Board of Guardians many of our ancestors could not have come to America.

1874—Many single men and some families stayed back east to work off their transportation debt.

1874—Our people homesteaded the land in South Dakota, and it cost \$14.00 to file on a claim; some lacked this money.

1874—Raw prairie was bought in McPherson County at \$3.00 and \$4.00 an acre.

1874—The first year on the bleak prairies of South Dakota many families were destitute; this was reported to the Immigration Committee in Philadelphia, who sent two men to investigate, and when they saw the need they bought 1000 sacks of flour to distribute among the needy.

1875—Many families in Dakota lacked funds to plant their crops, so Andreas Schrag and Joseph Kaufman were sent to the eastern states to borrow money; they succeeded in getting \$7,400.00 at 6% interest: this was apportioned \$100.00 to a family, and was later repaid.

1876—Hordes of grasshoppers destroyed, like crops Dakota, causing more hardships.

1878—On July 24 was the cloudburst flood of Vermillion Creek, which drowned seven persons.

1884—The Santa Fe Railroad Co. owned every odd numbered section in Reno, County.

1884—Our pioneers bought from the Santa Fe agents Brown and Bigger section 7 in Minnescah township, and sections 7, 9, 13, 15, 17, 21, 23, and 25 in Albion township at \$6.00 an acre for raw prairie and \$7.00 for fenced prairie, also a few improved single quarters were bought from homesteaders.

1884—The Mennonite Church of Albion Township was organized on October 10 with 88 members of about 30 families.

1884—The German language was used exclusively in devotional and business meetings.

1884—Burial in our church cemetery was started at the north end on west side of center drive-way, grave to grave in a row coming southward.

1885—John G. Graber was the first Sunday school superintendent of the Salem South Dakota church.

1885---The 5-acre tract of our Church yard and cemetery was purchased from Peter W. Kaufman and John J. Graber at \$6.00 an acre with the money: received from Brown and Bigger, who offered to pay \$50.00 for church purposes, if our pioneers bought 9 sections of land from the Santa Fe, and settled here, which they did.

1886—A store building was bought for \$80.00, and moved here remodeled for our first church building.

1886—The church budget was \$50.00; dues were \$1.00 per family, and the janitor's salary was \$15.00 per annum.

1886•—John C. Schwartz, who later became a member here was the first Sunday school superintendent in the Hopefield Church in McPherson County, Kansas.

1886—The Reverends J. J. Flickinger and John G. Graber preached free gratis in our church until 1914, and farmed for a living.

1887—There were seven candidates in the first catechism class, who were instructed and baptized by Eider Jacob Stucky.

1887—Our Mennonite Church joined the General Conference.

1888---Severe blizzard in South Dakota on January 12, five children froze to death, three Kaufmans, one Graber and one Albrecht.

1888---The deeds were drawn up and recorded to Mennonite. Church in Albion Township.

1889---Pretty Prairie was founded on present site.

1891—Our church joined the Western District Conference.

1897—Church building destroyed by tornado; insured for \$1200.00, \$1000.00 was collected.

1900—Church cemetery was laid in lots.

1903—Church dues were still \$1.00 per family; janitor salary, raised to \$38.00 per annum.

1903—On April 10 there were 144 participants at the Lord's Supper.

1903—Our church was displeased with band and band members.

1903—The early constitution was written in the old church book.

1905—Church building burned; full insurance of \$1800.00 was collected.

1905—After loss of church building by fire, meetings were held in tabernacle built for that purpose.

1905—Largest contribution to that building: fund was \$75.00.

1905—We dedicated new church building December 10, Rev. Jacob Quiring and Rev. John Hirchler were our guest speakers.

1905—Those in the building committee for this new church were Peter A. Graber, John J. D. Graber, Christian Graber, Peter J. Graber, John R. Graber, John Goering and Jacob A. Schwartz.

1907—Church dues were raised to \$2.00 per family.

1909—Organ was purchased for choir singing only.

1910—Use of organ was permitted for congregational singing also.

1910—Our church was host to Western District Conference.

1914—Fiscal year of business meetings changed from September to 1st Tuesday in January.

1914—Rev. John C. Goering's proposal with regulations adopted, for three years in interest of church unity.

1914—Three resignations in one day, Rev. J. J. Flickinger's, Rev. John G. Graber's, and Deacon Peter A. Graber's.

1914—Arbitration committee established under Goering proposal,

1916—Church dues changed from family to member.

1916—Church has 300 members.

1917—Crises in church, appeals to conference committee; a split averted.

1917—No standing minister; the congregation was served by supply ministers from March 1917 to May 1919.

1918—More lots were plotted in cemetery.

1918—Janitor salary raised to \$195.00 per annum.

1919—Church has since been calling outside ministers to serve here.

1919—Regular salary of ministers \$100.00 per month.

1919—Parsonage bought in Pretty Prairie, Kansas.

1920—First Bible Conference held here in tent with Rev. Wm. Gottshall, Rev. J. J. Balzer and other guest speakers.

1920—New constitution adopted and printed in German booklet.

1920—All church officials resign to make room for new ones according to the new constitution adopted.

1920—Office of Trusteeship established.

1920—The function of deacon now vested in 3-member board, and ordained in simple ceremony.

1923—A tract of ground 88 x 500 ft. donated to the Mennonite Church Parsonage fund by John J. Graber

1924—The Western District Conference was held in the Pretty Prairie high school auditorium with Arno C. Goebel, D. D., as guest speaker.

1927—First English Sunday school class, and English preaching at evening services.

1927—Services were held in the high school auditorium while old church building was dismantled and new one erected.

1927—Largest contribution fund was \$1,000.06, many gave \$500.00.

1927—May Corner Stone Laying service, names of pastors, deacons and building committee encased in marble Stone; Rev. J. W. Lorentz was pastor, Jacob B. Graber, Amos Flickinger and Jacob J. Graber were the deacons; the building committee was comprised of Emil Flickinger, John R. Krehbiel, Jacob B. Graber, Jacob A. Schwartz, Peter J. Krehbiel, Eli K. Stucky, J. J. Kaufman, Jacob J. Graber, John J. Vogt, Jacob Soft, and Peter C. Graber.

1927—New brick edifice erected with outlay of \$33,000.00 plus common labor by all male members and the lumber of old church building.

1928—Dedication of new brick edifice on February 5; guest speakers were Rev. P. P. Wedel, who spoke in the German language, and Rev. J. W. Kliever in the English.

1928—Change of sextant from J. J. Graber to Ben A. Schwartz.

1931—First ushers appointed.

1931—Deacon term of service changed from six to three years.

1932—Last German vacational Bible school.

1932—Our church incorporated as the First Mennonite Church of Pretty Prairie, Kansas. Names on charter are E. K. Stucky, Jonas H. Schwartz, A. A. Kaufman, J. K. Graber, P. J. Krehbiel, and R. J. Stucky.

1933—Change to one Sunday a month English preaching at morning services.

1933—Consecration of children started by simple ceremony.

1933—Junior church started in church basement under opposition.

1933—Monthly offerings for church maintenance started at Sunday morning services.

1934—50th Anniversary of Pretty Prairie Mennonite Church on October 14 with an all-day program, and meals served in the church basement; Rev. S. M. Musselman was chairman of the program.

1934—Mennonite congregation consists of 166 families and 466 members.

1935—Church buildings were connected to high line.

1936—Individual communion cup service instituted on January 3.

1938—Revision of constitution printed in German-English booklet.

1940—Peace Committee authorized and created.

1941—Mennonite church year book started.

1941—Lillian Schrag Heathershaw sent to African mission under the Soudan Interior Mission Board. At first under half support of our church, later under full support.

1942—Two Sundays per month English preaching.

1943—Business meetings and reports in English.

1943—No more children's Sunday school classes in German.

1946—Three Sundays per month English preaching.

1947—New communion table purchased.

1948—Eighty acres of land granted to church by R. J. and Emma Stucky; accepted on January 19 by special business meeting.

1948—Three lots in Pretty Prairie donated to parsonage fund by Dr. and Mrs. B. J. Stucky.

1948—Parsonage moved to Pretty Prairie, modernized, enlarged and reconditioned at cost of around \$8,000.00.

1948—September 5. Installation Service for Rev. H. G. Nyce. A message, "The charge of the church for the minister, and the charge of the minister for the church," on Eph. 4:11-12 was brought by Rev. Phil. A. Wedel, and Jonas Stucky gave the responsive Welcome in behalf of the church.

1948—All preaching in English language, except for German guest speakers.

1949—Church repaired, mortar replaced and painted, cost \$5,300.00



1949—September, 75th Anniversary program at Hopefield Church of coming of Swiss Wolynians.

1949—Church bulletins started.

1950—Basement ceiling completed, rest rooms installed, also new acoustic system installed.

1951—New electric Wick pipe organ installed at cost of \$10,000.00 with homecoming services all week.

1951—Mr. and Mrs. Fred H. Krehbiel donated \$500.00 to the organ fund in commemoration of their son Leland Ray Krehbiel.

1952—A number of members from our church, sponsored by the Mennonite Disaster Relief and our Relief Committee, assisted in clearing the wreckage at Searcy and Judsonia, Arkansas, after a cyclone had struck killing some 116 persons.

1952—April. Six men from our church spent two days in Topeka with the Reconstruction Unit. These men volunteered to go, and the expenses for this project were paid for by members from our church.

1952—June. Voluntary Service workers from our church were Betty Jo Voran to Topeka, Kansas, Catherine Graber and Norma Jean Voran to Crestline, California, and Jane Nyce was a councilor in Men-O-Lan, Pennsylvania, in July.

1953—May. Twelve men from our church went to Hebron, Nebraska, to help remove the debris of the recent tornado in answer to the call of the disaster committee there. Later some volunteers also helped at Eldorado, Kansas.

1953—Constitution revised and printed in English booklet.

1953—Resolution accepted to have 5-member Deacon Board with 5-year term.

1953—Trustees were authorized to sell 75 x 100 feet of ground to the Bell Telephone Co. for \$500.00.

1954—Since the church was founded over 900 young people have been taught the way of salvation, and been baptized by the various ministers who have served here, and over 200 couples were united in marriage.

"And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it." Psalms 90:17,

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