Mennonite Life

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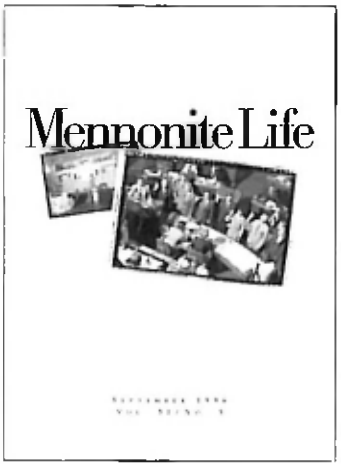
In *this* issue



front cover:

(left) The interior of the Zelenopole Ukrainian Orthodox Church, 1994. (right) Duane Goossen being sworn in as state representative (2nd from right), Kansas House of Representatives opening ceremony 1982.

In its fiftieth anniversary year, Mennonite Life *has gone through a review and renewal of its mission and editorial process, prompted by the resignation of James C. Juhnke as editor prior to his sabbatical in 1995-96. Beginning with this issue, our new editorial team hopes to bring our readers articles in four departments: history—edited by James C. Juhnke, professor of history at Bethel College, and Mary Sprunger, associate professor of history at Eastern Mennonite University; arts—edited by Raylene Hinz-Penner, associate for institutional advancement at Bethel College, and Carla Reimer, General Conference Mennonite Church News Service editor; theology and religion—edited by Duane Friesen, professor of Bible and religion at Bethel College, and Lois Barrett, executive secretary of the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church; and current issues—edited by Rich Preheim, associate editor of the* Mennonite Weekly Review, *and Brad Born, assistant professor of English at Bethel College.*

Each issue of Mennonite Life *will lead off with a major article or articles from one of our departments: current issues in September, the arts in December, theology and religion in March, and history in June. The other three departments will usually have briefer articles in each issue, although the theology and religion department will not begin until a later issue.*

With this change in editorial focus, Mennonite Life *returns to its roots by explicitly attempting to cover a broad range of stories concerning Mennonite history and culture.*

In this issue we include two articles addressing the question of how Mennonites should be politically involved. Duane Goossen is completing his seventh and last term as a representative of a heavily Mennonite district in the Kansas legislature. Since 1982, he has been the Republican representative of district 70, which includes all of Marion and Chase counties and parts of McPherson, Butler, and Lyon Counties. Goossen was active on the education and appropriation committees of the legislature. His occupation outside of the legislature has been as a homebuilding contractor. Goossen now lives in Goshen, Indiana.

John K. Stoner is the part-time coordinator of New Call to Peacemaking, an initiative to renew the peacemaking vision of the historic peace churches. He is currently teaching a course on "Faith and Society" at Messiah College and lives in Akron, Pennsylvania.

John Friesen presents us with the story of a former Mennonite community and church building in Ukraine and its post-Mennonite fate. Friesen spent many years as a land use specialist and senior planner with the Departments of Agriculture and Rural Development in Manitoba. Since retirement, he has pursued an ongoing interest in history.

Our arts section includes two poems from a weekend poetry retreat, "Invoking the Voice," at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mount Pleasant, Pennsylvania, May 9-12, 1996. The poems are reproduced from the retreat booklet assembled by participants.

Also in the arts section are photos of works shown at the Cincinnati Mennonite Arts Weekend, February 2-4, 1996, a poem by Peter Ediger of Las Vegas, Nevada, and a photo of a recent work by sculptor Gregg Luginbuhl of Bluffton, Ohio.

An additional new feature will be an occasional column of news from the Mennonite Library and Archives at Bethel College.

This issue concludes with the usual book reviews, including one of the newly-released volume 2 of Drink from the Stream: Essays by Bethel College Faculty and Staff.

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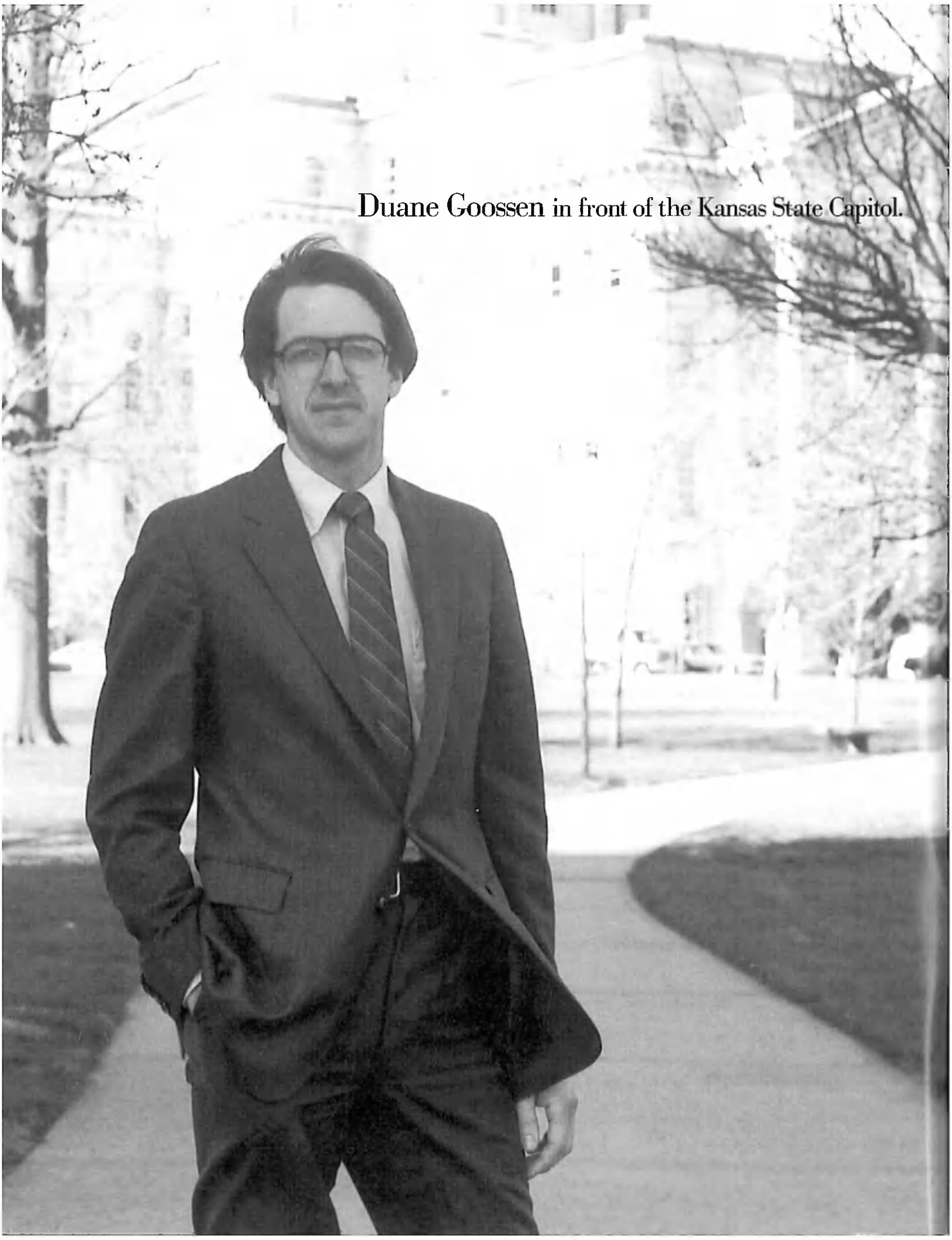

Duane Goossen in front of the Kansas State Capitol.

The Politics of Peace and Service: Calling All Mennonites

Duane Goossen

When speaking to Mennonite audiences, I occasionally begin my remarks by saying, "Paying your state income taxes is just as worthy as giving your money to Mennonite Central Committee." I use the statement as an opener and mean no offense to MCC. The line usually generates a laugh—a kind of reaction in the vein of "Someone from the government just thought up a new way to tell me I should be happy to pay my taxes." But in many ways we should.

During my fourteen years in the Kansas Legislature, I developed a very positive view of government, especially state government. I firmly believe government can be a useful tool in helping Mennonites carry out a mission of service to others and a mission of peacemaking. Both are integral components of Mennonite faith and life. And in both cases, government presents great opportunity for the influence Mennonites have to offer and benefits from the perspective Mennonites can bring.

Consider service to others. Government has a great capacity for good. In Kansas, of every dollar a citizen pays in state income tax, the first 90 or 95 cents goes directly to what could be called "people programs." A whopping 64 percent of the general budget—funded largely through state income and sales taxes—goes directly to education of various kinds: public schools, state universities, and tuition grants for Kansas students attending Kansas private colleges. (This includes the three Mennonite colleges in the state.) The next 17 percent goes for various social services. The remaining 19 percent is spent on public and environmental health, public safety, direct aid to local governments and general government functions.

Let's focus only on the social service portion of the budget and some specific examples of how that money is spent to serve people in need:

- A senior citizen being cared for in a nursing home depletes her life savings paying for that care. The Medicaid program, funded by both the state and federal government, begins paying the nursing home costs, allowing the citizen to remain in the nursing home and receive the necessary care. More than half of the residents in Kansas nursing homes are in the Medicaid program.
- Another senior citizen still lives at home, but circumstances would force him to a nursing home without regular visits from a health nurse, some meals brought in, and some help with household maintenance—services coordinated and paid for by state government.
- A child is abused by her parents. The state acts to protect her and to find a suitable, loving home through the family foster-care program.
- A young man has been mentally retarded since birth. Kansas public schools have provided special education programs for him to age 21. Now he participates in a vocational training program and lives in a state-funded group home.
- A mother of three is abandoned by her husband. She

possesses few job skills and little money. The husband owes child support, but he is nowhere to be found. The Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitative Services provides the mother and her children with monetary support and food stamps. She also enters a state-funded job training program that will eventually help her family to be self-sufficient.

Duane Goossen and Rachel Waltner Goossen campaigning, Marion County Fair parade 1988.

- A boy has had serious health problems since birth and needs expensive medical equipment to function well. His family cannot afford the equipment, but the state helps with the purchase through a special fund.
- After many years of struggling with alcohol abuse, a man enrolls in a drug-rehabilitation program funded by the state. Across town, school children are learning how to avoid drug and alcohol abuse through programs designed and administered by the state-funded regional prevention center.
- A father is stricken with catastrophic health-care problems. His family does not have adequate insurance and completely depletes their resources. Kansas medical programs begin covering medical costs for the father and regular medical expenses for the children in the family.
- A young woman is chronically mentally ill. With proper medication, she can function fairly well. Her community mental health center, funded partially by the state, helps her maintain an apartment and provides her the extra help she needs to be a productive citizen.

This list, drawing examples only from the state's social service system, could go on for pages. Even more pages could be added by considering the state's role in education, public health, environmental and water-quality programs, agricultural conservation programs, emergency medical services, and economic- and job-development programs.

For Mennonites concerned about meeting the needs of people, these government programs provide a basic organized and systematic framework. An assortment of organizations, churches, and individuals trying to provide these services could not do so nearly as consistently or uniformly. Certainly these programs have limitations and do not begin to meet all needs. Government can provide care and protection to a foster child but cannot guarantee that the child will be loved. Government can provide funds to care for a person in a nursing home but cannot insure that the person will be visited and honored. Government can fund mental-health and mental-retardation programs but cannot provide the acceptance those recipients need to live normally in their neighborhoods and communities. Government programs understand a mother on welfare only to the extent that she fits into a long list of eligibility rules. But these programs meet some basic needs. In meeting those needs, the best that can be hoped for is that the programs are operated in an evenhanded and dignified way.

Government can never take over the church's service mission. Government simply cannot replicate

acts of service done in love, nor meet all the needs, nor in some cases deliver services as efficiently as a focused and well-run non-governmental agency such as MCC. Nevertheless, government programs still provide a system of services that can be utilized to carry out a mission of service and love of neighbors.

Consider peacemaking. Government, when run well, keeps the peace. Our society is full of competing and diverse interests. Very fundamentally, government provides a structure that enables all those diverse people to live together peacefully. Lawmaking is conflict resolution constantly in motion. Individuals and groups bring their conflicts and competing desires to government, using the legislative process to reach nonviolent solutions.

- Fresh-water access in an area is limited. Irrigators, an industrial plant, and several towns all want access to the same water.
- Naturalists and citizens interested in economic development want to establish a park preserving prairie grassland. Neighboring ranchers and people concerned by the prospect of excessive federal and state land acquisition fight the proposal.
- Opponents of abortion want laws that make abortion illegal. Proponents of abortion rights want women to retain decision-making power.
- Cattle manure is the biggest pollutant in Kansas rivers. Clean-water advocates want more controls on runoff. Cattle feeders want to be able to operate practically and economically.
- Large school districts feel they have been funded unfairly in comparison to smaller districts.
- A group of parents believes the educational system is undermining the values they wish to pass on to their children. Other parents are equally adamant that the schools are operating correctly.

These examples are from my own experience in the Kansas Legislature. In each of these cases and in the hundreds and hundreds of others that come before governing bodies, the parties involved are provided a way to work through their differences. They first have a chance to help elect the people who make the decisions and then opportunity to influence the decisions themselves. The outcome often is some sort of common ground or at least something that all parties will abide by.

The resulting laws written by legislatures become a kind of contract citizens have with each other, guiding how we live and interact. The contract is constantly being reconsidered, debated, and changed as lawmakers respond to new conflicts. Above my desk in my legislative office I kept a set of the Kansas Statutes Annotated. These laws—the contracts Kansas citizens have with each other—take up about the size of an encyclopedia set. Every year the legislature passes new laws, and every year new volumes of the statutes are issued and old volumes replaced to reflect the changes.

If that set of laws is well written and government is well run, our society functions smoothly and peacefully. Of course that does not always happen. There are limitations to what government can achieve in

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conflict resolution and peacemaking, just as in the area of service. At best, we can hope that government will resolve conflicts in a just, evenhanded way. Government cannot motivate citizens to love each other. Government cannot convince people to forgive. Government does not deal in the concepts of loving one's enemies or turning the other cheek. Still, if government is operated justly and openly, a peaceful society is far more attainable.

Government can be an effective tool for service and peacemaking, but that tool has to be nurtured.

To help people in need is not an automatic government priority. Tax revenues are easily diverted to other areas. Needs that could be effectively met by government can be ignored. Programs are sometimes run poorly. Some programs, if misconceived, can even hurt more than they help.

Nor is a vision of a peaceful society an automatic top priority. Government decisions can often be motivated by personal gain or the narrow self-interest of a group. Decisions many times are made in a partisan way, based on what will bring more political power rather than what will bring a better society. Sometimes when interests clash, one side is too powerful and a minority view is crushed.

Who in our society is able to give government a vision for service and peacemaking and is able to coax government along the way toward that vision? Who is able to help develop the patterns of interdependence that will help us survive a nuclear age? Who is able to show that building up all people, even the weakest among us, creates a healthy, stable society? Given our historic focus on service and peacemaking, Mennonites are well positioned to affect government and make contributions to society. We have something very important to offer.

Given our historic focus on service and peacemaking, Mennonites are well positioned to affect government and make contributions to society.

Many Mennonites are already highly integrated into public life and civic concerns. In Kansas, the Mennonites in my legislative district are involved in government in almost every way. I would judge them to be intertwined in the political culture at least as much as any other denomination, perhaps more so. The Mennonites I know:

- Participate in both the Democrat and Republican political parties and hold party offices.
- Run for and hold elective office.
- Pay taxes.
- Are employees of government agencies, from road departments to social service agencies.
- Make political contributions, stuff envelopes for candidates, and put up yard signs.
- Accept government farm subsidies.
- Work for non-profit agencies such as nursing homes that accept money from government.
- Communicate regularly with government officeholders on how they think their taxes should be spent.
- Post political-issue briefs on their church bulletin boards and discuss political issues in Sunday school.
- Take their children to the state capital building on family trips.
- Teach in public schools and send their children to those same schools.
- Use the court system to settle legal disputes.

- Are active members of professional associations that regularly have business before lawmaking bodies.
- Contribute to the hiring of lobbyists through professional association dues.
- Expect clean water, sewage treatment plants that work, restaurants that are sanitary, banks that are regulated, and highways that are safe—and expect government to ensure all this.

For Mennonites, the question is not so much whether we involve ourselves in government but how we use our many contacts with government to further a vision of service and peacemaking. From my perspective, Mennonites ought to be more intentional in relating to government from a faith-based orientation.

But to be effective, we must set aside our own political self-interest, to the extent we can, and try to measure our involvement against broad goals. Mennonites have a tradition of witnessing to government on issues of deep moral concern such as capital punishment and militarism. That should continue. Mennonites' advocacy for peace and service, however, should encompass more. Do our political activities help the less fortunate? Are we compassionate? Is the end product of our actions a just society? How can we ease conflict? Do the candidates we support have a vision for these things or at least a capacity to discuss and consider them? Do the policies we promote reflect tolerance and respect for all people? Are minority viewpoints given a hearing? This requires us to recognize and accept diversity. This requires us to think creatively and practically about how to guide government toward such a vision.

Using service and peacemaking as guides does not necessarily route Mennonites into one political party or another. All parties need people with broad visions of service and peace. Nor do our faith-informed goals demand support for any single policy. I have seen Mennonites with the same broad goals differ significantly on how to achieve them. Vigorous debate over how to achieve a peaceful society is perfectly healthy.

The important thing is to try to instill our goals and visions into the political culture and process in whatever way we can—to let the Mennonite ideals of service and peacemaking influence all of our political involvements. Government is an ever-changing process, reflecting the desires and visions of the people who participate. No government will ever be pure or conform neatly to the ideals of a Mennonite people. The process of governing reflects many different interests and people, but the results can and should be affected by our participation in the mix.

So let's keep giving money to MCC and other church-related causes, but let's also realize the mission potential of our tax dollars. Let's keep hold of our historic vision of service and peacemaking, but let's allow it to flow into every area of our political participation. Let's continue nurturing bright young Mennonites who feel called to the ministry, but let's encourage others among our young people to become government servants—stewards of our resources and our vision.

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Toward a Mennonite/ Christian View of Politics

John K. Stoner

Should I vote for Dole, Clinton, Perot, Nader, Jesus Christ...? Or not vote at all?

Mennonites and politics—a puzzle, to be sure.

Like the eagle on their dollar bill, which holds olive branches in one set of talons and arrows in the other, Americans, and American Mennonites in particular, are of two minds in their thought about politics. That is, Americans believe that their democracy has achieved far more cultural transformation than it actually has, but simultaneously, they believe that due to the drag of sin, cultural transformation is impossible. We need a political attitude that transcends this contradiction.

Here is the problem. Americans ask you to look at what their democracy has done: it has ended King George's British tyranny over the Colonies; produced the Declaration of Independence; written the world's greatest document of governance, the Constitution; freed the slaves; fed the world; made space for God and religion; melted the pot; developed the west; invented the light bulb; given women the vote; birthed Henry Ford; produced the car; gone to the moon; built the mall; televised the NFL; won two world wars; isolated Castro; and woven the World Wide Web. All of this is affirmed periodically by going to the polls and voting. Democracy works. Isn't it wonderful!?

But next they describe all of the

elements of culture that are fixed in stone and can never be changed: Indians are lazy; war is inevitable; education costs too much; more prisons are needed; public transportation doesn't work; the car is sacred; old growth forests must be cut; homosexuals must be isolated; rain forests are an outdated luxury; acid rain can't be helped; blacks are lazy; arms sales strengthen the economy; land mines create jobs; nuclear weapons keep us free; global warming is a myth; advertising fills a need; fetuses are good; immigrants are bad; and poverty can't be helped. Humans are born in sin, and culture is trapped where it is.

Sin, Americans believe, guarantees the permanence of cultural depravity. The triumphs of democracy, on the other hand, are proven and perpetuated by the right and practice of voting. In this view, voting is the ultimate political involvement, the elixir of society's ills, the perfect tribute to democracy's success in the past, and the guarantor of its achievements in the future. To vote is to be a responsible member of society. The

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meaning of politics and the essence of political action is reduced, for all practical purposes, to the single act of voting.

But politics is vastly more than voting. Politics is the challenge of achieving human community. The root word is "polis," or city, which is the essential symbol of human community. Of course, narrower definitions are possible, such as the art or science of winning and holding control over a government, or activities characterized by artful and often dishonest practices. A moderate definition would be "the art or science of governing." This may be useful, if we think of governing as guiding the process of achieving human community.

As the challenge of achieving human community, politics deserves the attention and energies of Mennonites and all Christian people, because God, by all indications, has an interest in the development of human community. There will, of course, be people who make a specialty of governing, and that is not surprising. However, those specialists should not be left alone to define, by themselves, the meaning or content of governing. Every person has an interest in defining the shape of the human community, and narrow definitions of governing should not be permitted to obscure the fundamental goal of serving the needs of humanity as a whole.

For Christians it is worth remembering that the central message of Christ Jesus, whose name we bear, was that the kingdom of God has appeared in the midst of human affairs. I shall proceed to argue that this kingdom memory must be decisive for our political thought. Mennonites, as Christians, are bound to ask what Jesus Christ can teach them about politics or else to maintain a discreet silence about both Jesus and politics. This is an argument, I fear, that will not find easy acceptance with my readers,

Mennonites, as Christians, are bound to ask what Jesus Christ can teach them about politics or else to maintain a discreet silence about both Jesus and politics.

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whose indulgence for some moments I nevertheless beg. If this seems like strange politics, I respond that any discussion that includes Jesus is, by definition, strange in a way, and anyone who brings up Jesus has brought up a voice that is, in profound ways, quite alien. So be it. Jesus taught us to pray, "Thy kingship come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." That crosses over some planets, and if we pray the prayer, we are committed to making the leap. (Or we could, of course, abandon the prayer....)

Kingdom denotes reign or governance. The message of Jesus was that God is present and taking charge. The will of God is being done on earth as it is in heaven. This is thoroughly political, and only centuries of compromise with earthly kingdoms, growing out of a fear to challenge kings as directly as Jesus challenged them, has made it seem otherwise to most Christians.

But to speak of "kingdoms" is to confront a severe problem of language. "Kingdom" talk is not the current coinage of political discourse. The church might begin to correct the problem by abandoning altogether the use of the term "kingdom of God," because "kingdom" does not denote the basic unit of political organization in our time, as it did in the time of Jesus. The word is therefore incapable of communicating what Jesus meant, and no doubt evokes images, if any at all, of things he did not mean. So we need a new word.

I will suggest "the government of God," which is not an ideal substitute, but definitely an improvement over "kingdom." Other possibilities might be the "reign" of God, "sovereignty" of God, "civil authority" of God or "presidency" of God. To find alternative language is an ongoing task, and much needs to be done. But for this start I will contend that the main strength of "government" is its inescapably human and political tone. The word "government" clearly evokes a connection with existing human political sovereignties. The word "kingdom" did the same in Jesus' time.

At least three things are necessary if we are to give the concept of "the government of God" some of the political power and urgency that the message of Jesus conveyed. First, the term must communicate specific content—we must identify some key characteristics of the government of God. Second, there must be a sense of timing—when is the government of God expected to make its impact on human history? And third, we must describe the method by which this government of God will make itself felt in human affairs. By what form of power does this government pursue the goal of human community? It is by examining the content, timing, and method of the government of God that we find pearls of great worth in reclaiming our Christian call to political living.

The content of the government of God is most succinctly described in the words of Jesus recorded in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). The Sermon provides the closest thing available to a summary of the mind of Jesus on politics and the shape that the sovereignty of God is

destined to take in human affairs. The essential points are about as well known as they are widely ignored:

1. Behaviors that are rewarded in God's government:
   - The meek inherit the earth
   - Those who hunger and thirst for justice are satisfied
   - The merciful receive mercy
   - Peacemakers are called children of God
   - Those who are persecuted for the sake of justice receive the reign of God
2. Guides to human relationships and successful living:
   - be reconciled with your neighbor before doing any act of worship
   - never swear to the truth; instead, quite simply, always tell the truth
   - do not resist violence with violence; take initiatives for reconciliation
   - play God: love your enemies
   - do not seek earthly riches; trust God for sustenance
3. Principles of true religion and piety:
   - pray for God's government to come and God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven
   - do not advertise your philanthropy, your prayers or piety
   - learn to identify charlatans and false prophets by their smooth talk and manner of life, which deny the basic teachings of Jesus

The practice of these principles would revolutionize politics in America (and anywhere else). Mennonites could be most relevant to the political process in this election year by saying, in all kinds of ways and places, that the governance of the country must increasingly embody Sermon on the Mount principles, and will, in any case, be judged by them. Speaking the truth, in other words, is the most significant political action that is available to any of us—not voting, but speaking the truth. This view is based on the familiar Biblical notion that "the Word" is the central thing.

"Speaking the truth, in other words, is the most significant political action that is available to any of us–not voting, but speaking the truth."

The word is the truth; the expression of the truth by human lips and human lives moves culture and history toward the government of God. There is no higher form of political action, nor is there one which can contribute more to the wholeness of the human community. Speaking the truth can be done powerfully in settings as different as a Sunday School class, a local school board meeting, a political rally or town meeting. This is practicing the politics of God.

Individuals who speak much of "political realism" may wish to dismiss this as idealistic, irrelevant, out of touch, impractical, and pie in the sky. Which brings us to the second main question about the government of God, namely, when will, or can, it be realized?

The timing of the government of God speaks to when it might be possible (or expected) that the will of God shall be done on earth as it is in heaven. Jesus said that the government (kingdom) of God is like a mustard seed, which "is the

smallest of all seeds, yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade" (Mark 4:31,32).

The image of a seed conveys deep political wisdom. First, it indicates that the early steps toward the goal do not look like the goal itself. A seed does not look like a shrub or tree. Neither does the Sermon on the Mount look like politics or government. Probably for that reason, few Mennonites, or Christians of any type, start with Jesus' announcement of the government of God and the Sermon on the Mount when they think about politics. But in truth the only thing that will produce a tree is a seed. One could try other ways to produce a tree—ways which start with something that looks more like a tree. For example, one could cut off a branch and stick it in the ground (this actually works for a few species). Or bury and fertilize a pile of fresh, green leaves from a tree. Or start with a photograph of a tree, and plant and water that for a while.

"Culture can be transformed, and God might just give us, or hold us to, all of the time that it takes for culture to conform to the Sermon on the Mount."

The goal of politics—to achieve human community—can only be reached in one way: by planting the seeds that produce human community. Impatient efforts to enforce justice by violence or to construct human community by legal coercion are doomed to failure. The Sermon on the Mount describes the essence of the only politics that can hope for success.

The seed image speaks also of time and patience. Time, someone said, is nature's way of keeping everything from happening at once. Jesus taught a politics of patience, of waiting and watching. The goal of human community takes years, centuries, and millennia. The appearance of democratic government, replacing monarchy as the accepted standard, took millennia. The same was true of the abolition of slavery as a social institution. How long will it take to abolish the social institution of war? The recognition of women's rights and the abolition of patriarchy is a slow process. These things do not happen all at once. But they do happen because better ideas and practices are embraced, because God is active in history. Culture can be transformed, and God might just give us, or hold us to, all of the time that it takes for culture to conform to the Sermon on the Mount. It is a frightening, but also a challenging and hopeful, thought.

Thirdly, the method of the government of God is conveyed in the image of the cross. The cross is not the price that God exacted from the Son so that God would have something in return for extending forgiveness to guilty sinners. Jesus taught his disciples to forgive, demanding nothing in return. God might be expected to do as much. The cross is the revelation of the only kind of power that is greater than the power of death wielded by human governments—nonviolent power. The cross is the revelation of

the government of God.

Jesus said that anyone who wanted to follow him should take up their cross and follow his way (Mark 8). When he said this he issued an invitation to all of humanity, he announced a new government that is destined to take over the world, and he said that the dynamics of his own cross must define the life of every person who wants to join the struggle against the evil in the world—evil which works by coercion and death. When Jesus called upon everyone to take up their cross, he turned away from making the cross uniquely his own, and exactly to the contrary, made the cross the universal way for humankind, the way to bear witness to and live under the government of God. The cross is the willed acceptance of personal and present injustice and suffering for the sake of a wider and future realization of justice and peace. The cross is serious about the fact that actions have consequences; it performs an

"The cross is not the price that God exacted from the Son so that God would have something in return for extending forgiveness to guilty sinners."

action that exposes the fraudulence and futility of homicidal violence and contains the seeds of transformation of individuals and cultures.

In face of the fall elections, Mennonites should recall that voting is a small matter compared with holding a clear vision of the kind of human community for which one should be voting. Running—in a footrace, for election, to the polls—is a small matter compared with knowing the destination toward which one should be running. To run for office is a blind dash if neither the human purpose nor the appropriate methods of the office are deeply understood. Likewise, voting or not voting is a blind act or blind avoidance if dissociated from the call to a new community, a new Jerusalem.

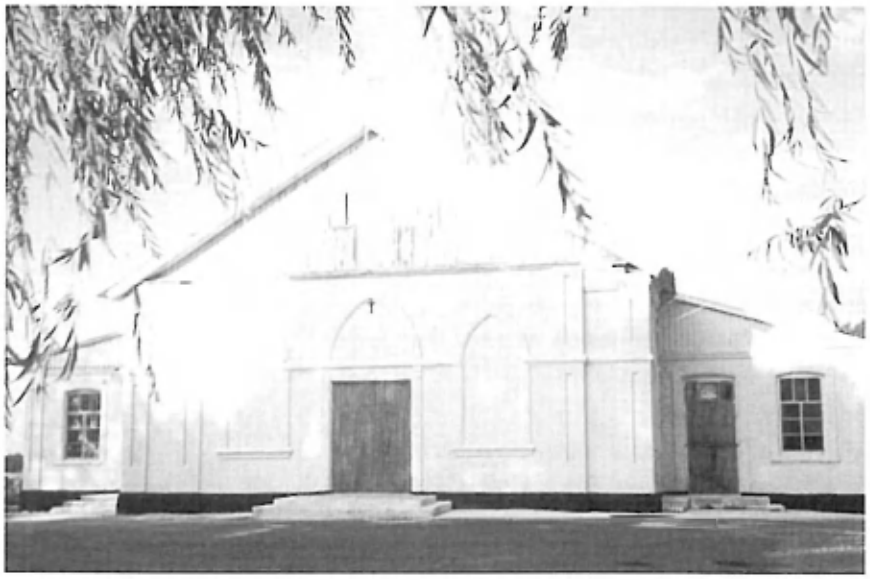
The Mennonite contribution to the political discussion could be to speak this truth, that the best help available for knowing the true goal and method of politics resides in the central images of the Judaeo/Christian tradition. Admittedly, there are painfully embarrassing things in this tradition as it has been practiced throughout history. Nevertheless, it should be remembered that this is an immensely self-critical tradition, one that has virtually specialized in identifying and denouncing its own failures, a process in which Jesus represented an epochal crisis and dramatic breakthrough. He was, of course, executed for his efforts, but so the human community moves forward, slowly but surely, as a mustard seed toward a tree.

The cross is the willed acceptance of personal and present injustice and suffering for the sake of a wider and future realization of justice and peace.

The Story of the Gruenfeld Mennonite Church in Zelenopole, Ukraine

John Friesen

In the center of a small Ukrainian village not far from the industrial city of Krivoy-Rog stands a stately village church. It is not the typical Ukrainian/Russian domed church in the form of a cross located in the center of the village square. Neither does the village reflect the typical layout of an unplanned and unordered small Ukrainian settlement so common on the steppe-lands north of the Black Sea. There is still evidence that the church building as well as the village as a whole was an implant by the Mennonites during the Russian pre-revolutionary period some 120 years ago. It represented the efforts to retain their rural lifestyle while seeking to resolve the severe problem of shortage of farm land in their colonies on the Russian Steppe by the systematic establishment of daughter settlements.



The Zelenopoli Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Zelenopoli, Ukraine, 1994.

Some of the basic patterns of settlement of that era have remained even today; there is the dominance of the central village street, lined on both sides by single family residences. However, on closer observation there have been profound changes from physical, social, political, and religious perspectives. Gone is the local village government, the activities surrounding the village school and the weekly Sunday attendance for worship at the village church. Gone are the typical farm house, barn and annex all under one roof. These represented the headquarters for some 40-50 family farms each with their individual farming enterprises on the cultivated fields lying adjacent to the village. The main industrial activities of manufacturing farm implements and the milling industry represented by two privately owned steam mills in the village do not exist any more.

What has remained is the village street, now boasting a graded, dust-free surface lined on both sides by small unpainted houses that provide shelter for the collective workers. Each house has its identifiable small plot of land with a metal front gate, shade and fruit trees dominating the front yard, and a large vegetable plot to the rear of the house. In addition to the house, a few small out-buildings are common for the shelter of a few chickens and perhaps a pig or two.

The main activities of the collective farm take place on the grain and corn fields surrounding the village. On the north end of the village are the dairy barns and the milking sheds, as well as the silage bunkers for storage of winter feed; here also is located the farm

machinery repair depot and the large unorganized outdoor storage area for farm machinery. Across the main road are the grain storage buildings and a large area for temporary grain storage and handling.

The name of this Ukrainian village is Zelenopole (Selenoje Polje). It was formerly the Mennonite village of Gruenfeld, one of two villages of the Schlachtin daughter colony created in 1874 by the Chortitza Colony. It was part of the overall effort to help diminish the "landless crisis" resulting from the rapid growth of population and the ever increasing need or demand for farm land. In 1874 some 80 young farmers together with some more experienced farmers (to provide capital for community projects and enhance overall stability) were relocated from the Chortitza Colony and the establishment of the two-village community was begun. Much effort, sacrifice, and time, together with financial and other assistance from the mother colony, was used to establish the new community.

The sites for the two villages had to be chosen and the village plans had to be laid out. The site chosen for Gruenfeld was on the uplands; the neighboring village of Steinfeld, some 7 km. to the north, was located in the lowlands of the Saksagan River. The farm land had to be surveyed into small fields immediately adjacent to the villages and larger fields more remote. These fields had to be allocated before preparation for cultivation could begin. Homes and barns had to be erected, trees (including fruit trees) had to be planted. Provision had to be made for community services such as schools, churches, and local government. (One of the first acts, after the completion of the list of farm families moving to the new location, was the election of the mayor and his assistants to provide village government).

With a helping hand from the mother colony and the hard work of the new settlers, the fledgling colony began to mature in terms of earning its livelihood, developing services, providing elementary education and organizing the community church. Educational facilities were provided for as soon as shelter for the new settlers had been built and barns erected for livestock. Church services were held for a number of years in homes during the winter and in the barn annex during the summer. Ministers to serve the religious needs of the community were elected from the villagers and the function of the Aeltester was provided for by the Chortitza Colony for a number of years.

Farm mechanization, higher

Priest Maruschkai at the open door.

standards of farm management, and the maintenance of farm size played important roles in the overall success of the agricultural enterprise. Industrial development, along with the successful conversion to commercial grain farming and the economic returns from the horse breeding enterprise, allowed the settlers to replace their smaller residences and barns with substantial new brick buildings.

This economic growth also provided the opportunity for the community to plan for and build a church that would meet their spiritual needs. The new big brick church, located in the center of the village with a brick fence surrounding it and framed by lombardy-type poplars and conifers, was dedicated on October 27, 1909. The residents of the community considered it a model and showcase church. The following year the Colony, along with the Mennonite communities in close vicinity, elected their own Aeltester, Rev. Abram Paetkau; he replaced Aeltester Isaak Dyck from the Chortitza Colony. For the Schlachtin Colony and the adjacent Baratow Colony, this election signaled their independence from the mother colony. After the death of Abram Paetkau in 1919, Jacob Rempel become the Aeltester. His theological training in Switzerland and experience in the Mennonite church provided the basis for introducing basic reforms in the various functions and activities of the church, including, on the local level, church membership, Christian education such as Sunday School, youth activities, weekly Bible study and prayer meetings, and on the regional level, Bible expository sessions. Together with the Mennonite Brethren in Steinfeld, church choirs, mass choirs and song festivals were organized and trained under guest leadership.

Then came the introduction of Stalin's first five year plan in the late 1920's which commenced the farm collectivization program, the compulsory grain quotas and expulsion of the kulaks (the leading farmers in the community); Aeltester Jacob Rempel was ordered to deliver 500 bushels of wheat to the local Soviets. He had never produced a bushel of wheat in his life. Shortly after that he was taken to Krivoy-Rog where he was told that his presence in Gruenfeld did not fit in with the government's socialization policies.

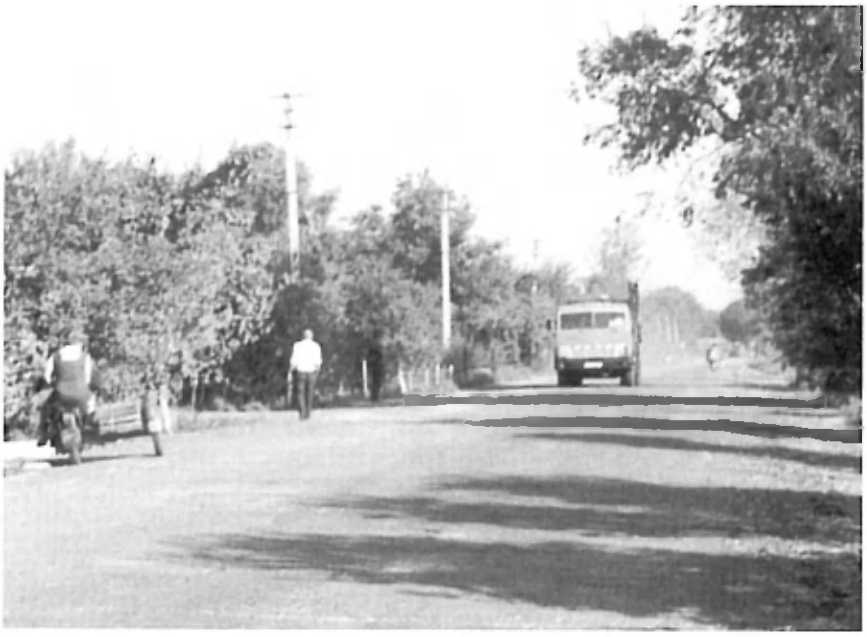
On October 16, 1929 the Gruenfeld Mennonite Church was closed by Edward Gross, an official of the local Communist party. Several approaches were used by the local Soviets to implement a closure policy on a "voluntary" basis. Once all the ministers were either in hiding or had been banished, a meeting was called by the Regional Soviet Committee to determine the future of the church. The Committee rationalized that it was unnecessary to keep the church open with all the ministers gone. Within a few months after the meeting—which decided to keep the church open—another representative held a meeting to explain that all buildings, including the church, belonged to the government and that it could not allow an expensive structure to deteriorate. The local Soviets would arrange an inspection of the building

to assess the repair costs. Plans were prepared which detailed the maintenance required and the associated costs. The cost estimates were so high that the community could not possibly raise the amount required. Many had barely enough money to pay for taxes and food. However, the official was adamant and under the circumstances the meeting decided to close the church. Another approach was simply to increase the taxes for the operation and maintenance of the building to such a level that the local membership did not have the means to pay the taxing agency. And thus it came about on a "voluntary" basis to lock the doors of the church.

The church building in Gruenfeld then reverted to other uses. While under the control of the local Soviet from 1929 to 1993 the structure was used as grain storage, as shelter for bulls used as breeding stock, as a dormitory for a chauffeur training school and, more recently, as a club house and cinema.

For a brief period (August 1941 to October 1943) during the German occupation of Ukraine, the building once more functioned as a church for the Mennonite community. On Pentecost Sunday in 1943, 73 young people were baptized and accepted into the congregation by Aeltester Johann Penner. During this period the church was served by two ministers, Peter Sawatzky and Abram Rempel; Liese Harder served as choir conductor. Also during the war years the church building suffered some damage and a new roof was required. This most likely occurred after October 1943 when there was severe fighting in this area as the front moved back and forth a number of times as the Germans attempted to hold on to the industrial center of Krivoy-Rog. It was also during this time that the Mennonites fled in mass from the southern Ukraine including Gruenfeld, just ahead of the retreating German forces. The Mennonites ended up first in German-occupied Poland and then in Germany from where many migrated either to Canada or to South America. A large number were repatriated to the former U.S.S.R.

From 1944 until 1992 the church building again reverted back to the control of the local Soviets. In late 1991 the Ukraine declared its independence from the fast disintegrating Soviet Union. With this independence came the freedom of religion which penetrated even into the rural areas, including the village of Zelenopole. It is at this stage that the priest of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Timophey Maruschkai enters the picture. He



The main village road in Zelenopoli, 1994.

was impressed by the structure of the former Mennonite Church; additionally, he was fascinated when he learned about the history of the building. When he discovered that the structure had at one time served as the "Temple of God" for the local community and that it was now being desecrated in serving for the advancement of atheism, he became resolute in his goal. It became his burning desire to again return this building to the purpose it was originally intended in the first instance. One of his concerns was to make contact and consult with those who originally owned the building and who had used it as a house of worship. With this in mind he made contact with one of the few Mennonites still resident in the village, Walter Wiebe, a widower who grew up and now lives in Gruenfeld and who has maintained communication with relatives and friends in Canada.

Through Walter Wiebe connections were made with the executive office of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada regarding the wishes and request of the Rev. Timophey Maruschkai for a written word of blessing and an endorsement for the use of the building as a church of the Ukrainian Orthodox community. On October 5, 1993 Helmut Harder, executive secretary of the Conference, conveyed to the priest the sincere support of the Mennonite community in Canada in "developing the former Mennonite Church building as a centre for the worship and work of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in the area". In his letter to the priest he ended with the prayer "that the Lord God will bless the place of worship and the activity that is carried on there...." He requested, "that our people will always be welcome as visitors in Zelenopole."

While the process needed to close the operation of the club activities and cinema in the building and to open it as a church is unknown, there was some opposition locally to this change. It directly affected the whole community as well as the workers involved in operating the club and cinema activities.

The first Orthodox service in the church was held in 1993 at Easter, to celebrate the resurrection of Christ. This is the greatest festival of the year in the Russian Orthodox Church. Processions (kreat nye khody) around the exterior walls of the church during the celebration of Easter were likely part of the ceremony.

As you take a stroll down the village street today, you will see the line of trees forming an intermittent pattern unplanned and unstructured. The shade and fruit trees in the front yards of the modest unpainted homes of the Ukrainian Collective workers are visible. Here and there the distinctive architectural styling of former Mennonite buildings can be seen. Upon reaching the central part of the village, you can see the glimmer of the white walls of the church through the trees as the afternoon brightens the front facade. As the whole front of the church comes into view, the visitor realizes what an impressive building it is even today. The walls of the building are

constructed of brick; the gable ends have been covered with vertical wood siding. The decorative round window in the middle of the front gable has been removed. The main double front door is centered on the front facade; it is balanced by the two arched windows on either side. The strong horizontal lines have been somewhat diminished by replacing the windows with plain inlaid brick.

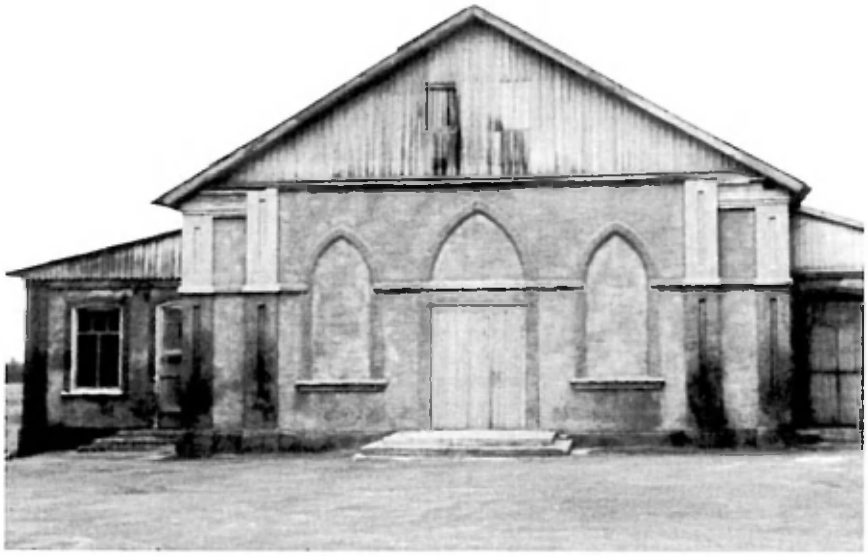
The roof has a covering of corrugated metal, probably installed when the roof was replaced after World War II. The exterior walls have recently received a white coat of paint or white wash which will act as a preservative both for the brick and the mortar.

A small inconspicuous cross has been placed on the peak of the roof in the front gable end. A crucifix has been placed on the top of the main arch over the front door.

Upon crossing the front yard and approaching the front door, a warm welcome by the priest in his priestly robe awaits you. He gladly invites you into the church to participate in worship and receive there the personal blessing from the priest.

Inside the church, the main sanctuary is spacious and roomy with no benches for the parishioners, as is the normal practice of the Orthodox Church. At the front of the sanctuary is the chancel with a raised platform reserved for the clergy and other church officials. It is here where most of the icons are displayed. (Icons are devotional paintings or a type of religious representation for which Russia and the Ukraine are particularly famous. Icons have traditionally played a very important part in the religious instruction and devotional life of Christians of the Orthodox faith.)

On Sundays the residents again wend their way down the village road to the church for their worship service much like the Mennonites of Gruenfeld did some eighty-five years ago. Today some 20 to 30 worshiper assemble here on a regular Sunday morning; on Sundays when special Christian celebrations take place the number increases to approximately 50.



The Gruenfeld Church under Soviet control, 1989.

Note: For additional information on the Gruenfeld Mennonite Church and the village of Gruenfeld see *"Against the Wind: The Story of Four Mennonite Villages in Southern Ukraine (1872-1943)"* by John Friesen. A copy of the book can be obtained from the author, 104-1850 Henderson Hwy., Winnipeg Man., CANADA R2G IP2 for $20 plus $2 mailing cost.

Invoking the Voice

poetry

In early May of 1996 the Laurelville Mennonite Church Center at Mount Pleasant, Pennsylvania, hosted a weekend poetry retreat, "Invoking the Voice," for serious poets and those with a strong interest in creative writing. Laurelville billed the retreat its "inaugural poetry festival," offering time to participants to create new work, share their poems, and confer with working poets. The resource persons were Jeff Gundy, Raylene Hinz-Penner, Scott Holland, and Julia Kasdorf. Poets had prepared workshop sessions on issues of writing inspiration and technique and met individually with poets to discuss their work; Scott Holland provided continuity for the retreat with explorations/meditations on the poetics of culture and religion. Laurelville hopes to make this event an annual affair which draws retreat participants from across the country to come savor springtime in the Laurel Mountains as together they "invoke the voice." The following poems are examples from the retreat booklet assembled by participants.

Another Perspective on Maleness

They arrive nameless
and know no gods.

They strangle in sleepers,
Fall out of bed,
Burn in the sun.

Sleep catches them
and they succumb,
necks bent double
over their naked chests.

They'll pee in their own faces
If you let them.

Jennifer Halteman Schrock
Columbus, Ohio

First Footwashing

We always washed feet in the left foyer at church
on spent mornings between the bread and benediction;
downstairs, I watched women shucking legs out of nylons
like fresh yellow corn from clinging husks
brought inside from burlap strips
to rest in water against the kettle sides;

then padding upstairs where the basins sat
like miniature ponds, round, full, warm,
women kneeling and rising from green carpet
as rhythmic as their own night breathing.

The first time I wore a covering and drank juice
I knew from years of spying to take the ironed cloth
and kneel over close bareness of some grandmother,
her legs sprouting purple veins before my squinting eyes.

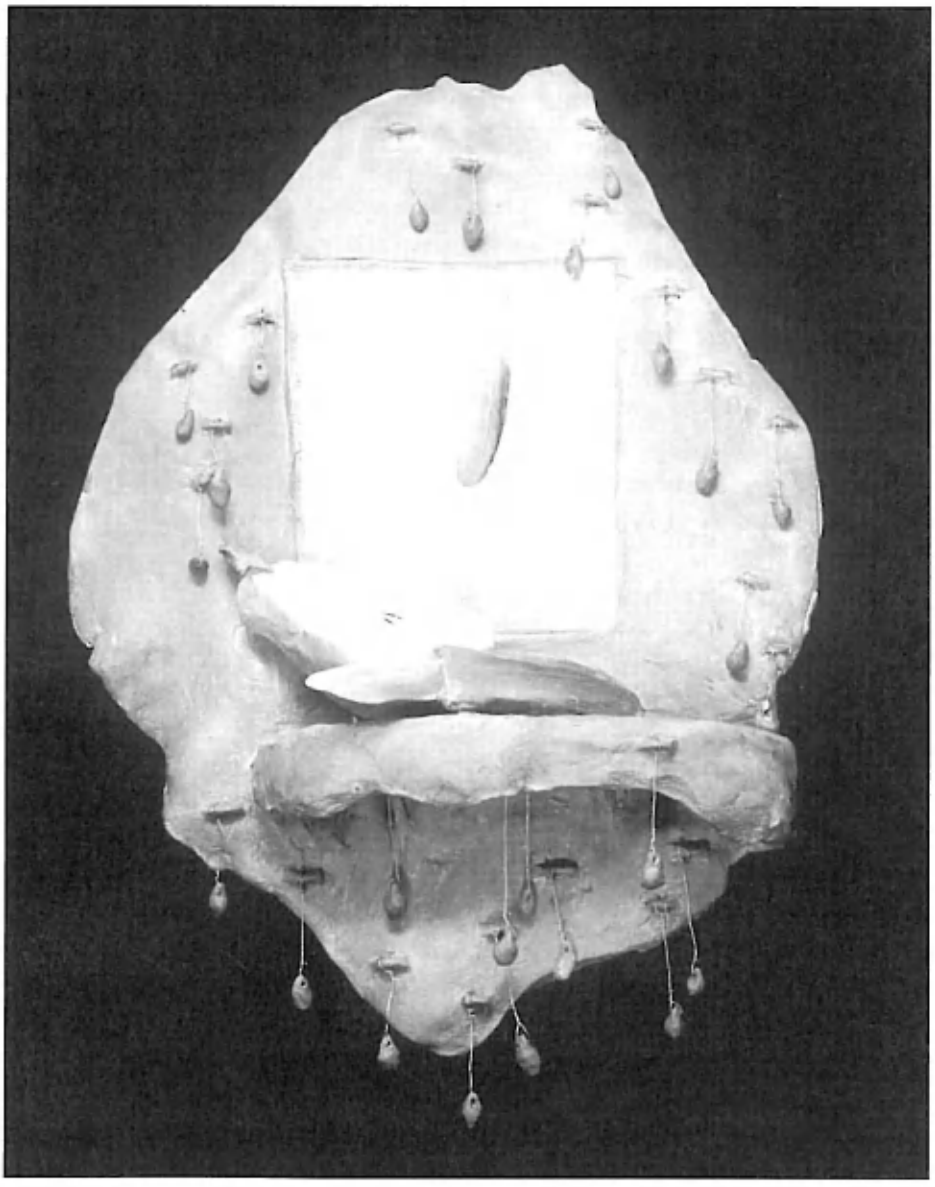
Holding her falling arch in my palm, I felt the chalky flesh
of a past I hadn't lived, each liquid handful taking me closer
to whitewashed days of sweat and naked bowing necks.

The waiting and dreamed-of-ritual grace
of the slow and spooning baptism of toes,
sloughed into my pooling memory,
and I pulled the white towel over whiter skin,
over toenails, knuckles, hair, and ankles.

Valerie Weaver
Scottdale, Pennsylvania

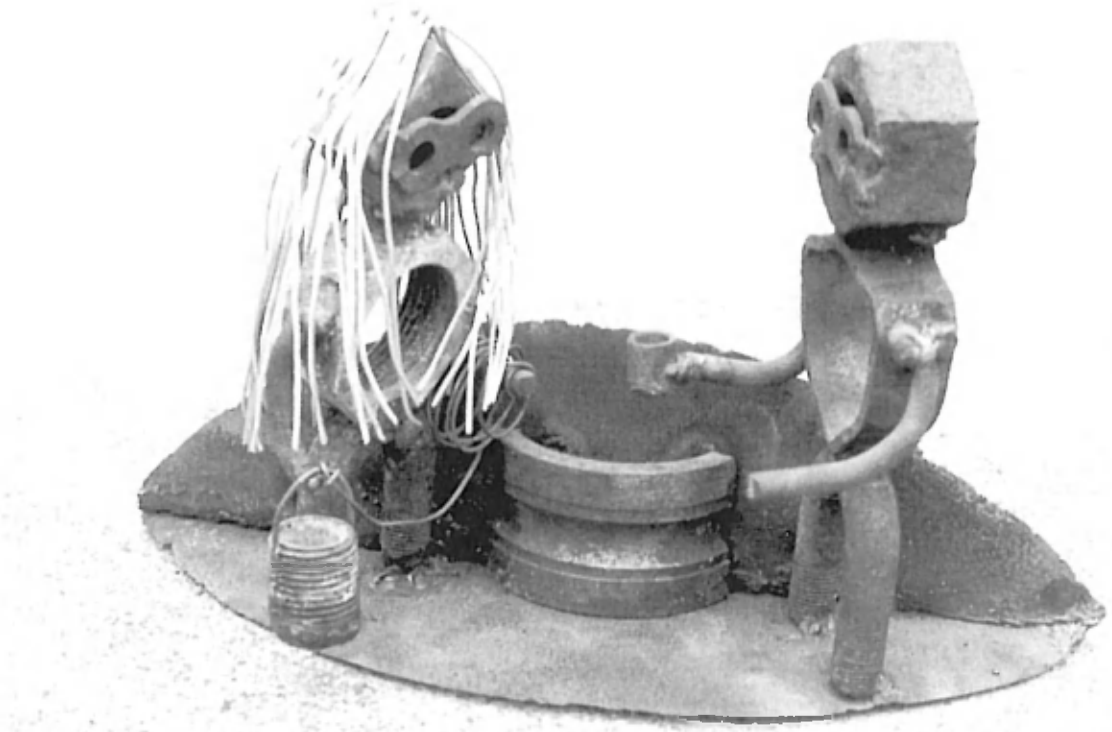
Cincinnati Mennonite Arts Weekend 1996

The Mennonite Arts Weekend held in Cincinnati, Ohio, February 2-4, 1996, included a visual arts exhibit with thirty small works, none larger than 8"x10". The Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship sponsored this biennial event. Cheryl Pannabecker, Mahlon Schmucker and Merrill Krabill were among the 18 artists represented.



Cheryl Pannabecker, Cincinnati, Ohio

Annunciation Scene/ceramic and mixed media



Mahlon Schmucker, Wooster, Ohio

Jesus Talks to the Woman at the Well /welded metal

Merrill Krabill, North Newton, Kansas

Embryo Series /ceramic and mixed media

What Did They Grow?

Peter Ediger

Did they grow wheat, or what?

Sometimes I think I see their stubble
in my eyes
when I make my face into what is
now more smooth
than their rugged faith was then, by
all accounts.

Are they, being dead, still growing,
or what?

Sometimes I think I hear their
footfalls in my feet
when I walk the path into my
muscles which are now
less limber than their souls were
then, by all that counts.

Are they, whose time is up, still
running, or what?

Sometimes I think I hear their fire in
my soul when
I sing my voice into the choir singing
songs of heaven where
their souls went singing as their
bodies burned, on His account.

Are they, with voices stilled, still
singing, or what?

Peter Ediger
Las Vegas, Nevada

Gregg Luginbuhl, Bluffton, Ohio

Jonah/model, 1996/bronze/19 3/4"x5"x8"

Jonah is seen in deep personal and spiritual confusion—floating, buffeted by currents and breakers, sinking, submerged, part human and part fish. Fetal, hands clasped and drawn inward, he laments his weakness and loneliness, thanking God for mercy and salvation.

Waves formed by the motif of Jonah's hair, tangled with seaweeds and sea animals, buoy a playful orca. Jonah's deliverance is depicted as an acrobatic spiritual resurgence. The open figure's leap and reach are juxtaposed with the cruciform fluke of the whale.

News from the Mennonite Library and Archives

The Mennonite Library and Archives at Bethel College has not consistently published a newsletter reporting activities and ongoing projects. There have been at least two different newsletters in past years. *A Grain of Dust from a Musty Corner* was an unattractively titled news sheet of which only two issues survive: September 1953 ("second grain") and February 1955 ("third grain"). A more hopeful title, *Gleanings from the Threshing Floor*, ran from April 21, 1976, to April 1989. Now we have decided to make use of the pages of *Mennonite Life* for reporting of occasional library and archives news concerning new acquisitions, personnel changes, special projects and events, and whatever else might be of interest.

• Olivia Bartel, a recent Bethel graduate in music and German, began work in August 1996 as library assistant. She replaced Kevin Dyck, who worked in the position from August 1994 to August 1996 and has now moved on to graduate school in philosophy at the University of Kansas. Continuing personnel include John D. Thiesen, archivist; Barbara A. Thiesen, librarian; Rosemary Moyer, photograph archivist; and volunteers Stan Voth and Ruth Unrau.

• Among the more interesting recent acquisitions are a copy of Georg Hansen's *Een Fondament-Boek der Christelyke Leer* (Amsterdam, 1696) which we purchased in May 1995. Hansen was the elder of the Old Flemish congregation in Danzig. This is, as far as we know, the only extant copy of this book. The copy purchased by the MLA is the copy that was used by Isaak Peters to produce a German translation, *Ein Fundamentbuch der christlichen Lehre* (Elkhart, IN: Mennonitische Verlagsanstalt, 1893).

• In March 1995 a set of diaries of H. R. Voth, an early General Conference missionary to the Cheyenne and Arapaho in Oklahoma and to the Hopi in Arizona, were donated to the MLA by his daughters. The diaries cover the years 1877 to 1930. The MLA already had a substantial amount of Voth's papers and photographs, including diary volumes from the 1890s; his Hopi materials are the single most frequently used collection at the MLA, being of considerable interest to researchers outside of Mennonite circles. The Voth diaries from the 1890s, his first term as missionary to the Hopi, have been transcribed by MLA library assistant Kevin Dyck from the handwritten originals into a more readable, computer-printed form. Additional diary transcriptions will be done in the future, although Voth's use of a German shorthand system during much of the 1880s poses an obstacle. After some extended investigation, we finally concluded that Voth used the Stolze shorthand system, which was widely used in mid-nineteenth century Germany.

• In August 1996, about 15 cubic

feet of records were transferred to the MLA from the former Bethel Deaconess Hospital of Newton, Kansas. Bethel Hospital had been run by the Western District Conference of the General Conference Mennonite Church from its founding in 1908 until its merger with another church-owned hospital in Newton in 1988.

- We recently received a copy of the GRANDMA vol. 1 CD-ROM disk from the California Mennonite Historical Society. The acronym stands for "Genealogical Registry and Database of Mennonite Ancestry." The disk contains a genealogy database of 135,482 names, mostly from the Dutch-Russian stream of Mennonites, in GEDCOM and Brothers Keeper formats. In addition, it contains a database of ship passenger list information for Mennonite immigrants from 1872 to 1904, including 14,220 names, in the same file formats. It also includes scanned images of the record book of the Rosenort church in Prussia and of maps from Mennonite areas in Russia and Prussia. This new tool for Mennonite family history research, although it has some weaknesses such as inadequate documentation of sources, foreshadows significant changes in how Mennonite historical research will be done in the future.

- The MLA has had a World Wide Web since November 1995. We were the first Mennonite archives or historical library to put up a web page.

http://www.bethelks.edu/services/mla/

Book Reviews

John K. Sheriff and Heather Esau, eds. *A Drink from the Stream*. Vol. 2. North Newton, KS: Bethel College, 1996. Pp. 272. ($18.00 — paperback) ISBN 0-9630160-8-3

A Drink from the Stream, volume 2, is a collection of twenty-three new essays written by Bethel College faculty and staff. In addition, it contains five essays held over from the first volume as those "that teachers especially like to teach and students enjoy reading" (Sheriff, Foreword).

In the Foreword, co-editor John Sheriff explains that "the essays and brief biographies in this collection offer a taste of the spirit, vision, dedication, scholarship and good humor that give Bethel College its unique identity and energize those who 'drink from the stream' of learning and faith teeming in this place." That about sums it up. The essays do not speak with a single voice or focus on a single theme. In many cases, they allow authors to demonstrate the sort of critical issues and approaches to critical thinking common to their disciplines. In others, they let authors reflect on their relationship with their disciplines. The result is a collection of special interest to the Bethel College community and of general interest to everyone interested in liberal arts education.

Like its predecessor, *A Drink from the Stream*, volume 2, was commissioned as a text book for Bethel College's first-year composition classes. It's ideal for this purpose because it models a range of styles and includes essays on various academic topics but mercifully without the jargon too often associated with academic writing. By including essays from across the curriculum and from outside the traditional academic disciplines, *A Drink from the Stream* reminds students that writing matters in all walks of life. Photographs and brief biographies preceding each essay share personal and professional information about the authors.

While this review can't address each essay in the volume, I'll mention a few that emerged as my favorites and use them to point out several themes and trends in the collection. (I'll also apologize in advance to those wondering how I could single out this or that essay while neglecting their own favorites.) Many of the essays explore an author's personal connection with his or her academic discipline. Of these, Brad Born's "Trumpet Lessons," Raylene Hinz-Penner's "Northern Lights," Duane Friesen's "Living on the Boundary," and Daniel Quinlin's "The Language of Learning" are especially notable. Other essays introduce readers to some critical question of the discipline. For example, Don Lemmons asks the question, "Is Physics Multicultural?" and A. Wayne Wiens offers "A Celebration of Genetic Diversity." Some pieces demonstrate the kinds of writing central to the authors' academic disciplines. Examples include historian Keith Sprunger's article on Mennonite historian C. Henry Smith and literature scholar John Sheriff's explication of a short parable. It's also refreshing to see members of one academic discipline writing in the style of another. For example, Arnold Wedel, Professor Emeritus of the Mathematics department, combines a fascinating biography of Polish mathematician Stefan Banach with personal reflections on Wedel's own visit to Poland.

The collection also features a wide range of writing styles. Les Goerzen's "A Winding Stairway" stands out for its narrative voice; Fern Graber's "Journal of a Nursing Professor" is written, as its title suggests, as a series of journal

entries, and Ami Regier's "Critical and Cultural Work" uses the structure of episodic travel writing; essays by Wynn Goering, Dwight Krehbiel, Dwight Platt, and John Sheriff—among others—were first presented as public talks. Some pieces offer more than just prose text: Hinz-Penner's "Northern Lights: and Marla Krell's "Cross Praying" include poetry; Merrill Krabill illustrates "Thoughts about Art" with photographs of his own work.

Sheriff has expressed his hope that the second volume contains more humor than the first. A definitely lighter tone flavors such essays as Kathleen Regier's "Memories of Harvest" and Marla Krell's "The Pulpo," a narrative of a trip to Italy.

So, why would this collection appeal to anyone not associated with Bethel College? As I showed it to colleagues at my Lutheran liberal-arts college, they were interested less in the content than in the structure and idea of the volume.

Composition programs elsewhere could use *A Drink from the Stream* as a model for producing their own essay anthologies to showcase writing from across-the-curriculum and from within each institution's academic community. One observation that several colleagues made, however, was that local politics would stymy efforts first to solicit essays that would be subjected to classroom scrutiny and then to select pieces representative of the institution. That Bethel was able to avoid such conflicts is indeed a tribute to its community spirit.

A Drink from the Stream, vol. 2, has limited distribution. Copies are available from the Bethel College bookstore (316-284-5205) for $18 (including shipping).

David Sprunger
Concordia College
Moorhead, Minnesota

John D. Rempel, *The Lord's Supper in Anabaptism: A Study in the Christology of Balthasar Hubmaier, Pilgram Marpeck, and Dirk Philips*. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1993. Pp. 272. ($29.95) ISBN 0-8361-3112-6

In this study, Rempel investigates a central theme not only in Radical Reformation theology, but in the theological conflict of the Sixteenth Century as such. One of the earliest and most divisive issues in that larger conflict, it should not be surprising to discover that the three "representative" radical theologians selected by Rempel did not agree on all points either—what three theologians ever have without being coerced by the state? Rempel appears to have chosen his "representatives" simply on the basis that they wrote quite extensively on the topic. The three are: Hubmaier, Marpeck, and Dirk Philips.

Rempel sets his discussion of the eucharistic theology of the above theologians into the context of the tension between their Christology and their ecclesiology, the celebration of the eucharist being the point at which the risen Christ communes with His body, the Church. It is already at this point that it could be argued that Rempel does not place enough emphasis on the nature of the latter as understood by our three theologians, for the "wheat and the tares" model of the territorial church nearly necessitated some form of objective grace in "sacraments" such as baptism and the eucharist. Proclaiming a "believers' church" based upon regeneration (conversion)—neither of which words appear in Rempel's index—focuses God's grace at the moment of the transforming divine-human encounter in which faith has its origin, and creates a very different context for the celebration of the eucharist in the body of

believers. In the context of the above tension, then, Rempel is much more interested in the relationship of these radicals' eucharistic theology to their Christology than he is to their ecclesiology.

This is nonetheless an excellent study on a long neglected topic that demonstrates how the above theologians—especially Hubmaier—sought to divorce themselves from the transubstantiation theology of the Catholic Church on the one hand, and the Spiritualism—especially Marpeck and Philips—of Schwenckfeld and Franck on the other. In this respect, Rempel's study helps to clarify the lines dividing the various Radical Reformation parties even though he buys into the polygenesis thesis. Hubmaier, according to Rempel, being more concerned with the Catholic position which had obliterated the lines dividing *res* from *signum* (the essence from its representation) in the eucharist, but also rejecting the *est-significat* (symbolic) interpretation of Karlstadt and Zwingli, argued that the Spirit rather than the Son is the divine presence in the church since Christ's ascension. Therefore, in Hubmaier's theology the church takes Christ's place—is His body—in the world and celebrates the eucharist as an act of obedience to previously given grace: "it becomes a mutual act of love on the part of the community toward its members and the world."

Some of the quotations from Hubmaier's writings (such as the one at the bottom of p. 47), make it apparent that while Hubmaier does not reject the term sacrament, he interprets it differently—as a "commitment by oath and a pledge given by hand, which the baptized one gives to Christ." This is also the way Erasmus used the term, and it led him to suggest that children be instructed in the faith at age 12 or so and then be asked to commit themselves by oath to Christ and the faith. It appears that Tertullian was the first to introduce the term into theological discourse, and he did so in precisely the same sense: a *sacramentum* being an oath of loyalty Roman soldiers swore to their sovereign. A close reading of Tertullian's writings, and those of Erasmus, might have added to Rempel's discussion of Hubmaier's theology of the eucharist. Tertullian, incidentally, may have played a very significant role in Anabaptist theology; he certainly did in terms of their understanding or baptism.

Marpeck's theology presents a different context and different problems. Here the context is the dialogue between Schwenckfeld the Spiritualist, who rejects all "material" aspects of the eucharist, and Marpeck who wishes to retain at least some of them. Schwenckfeld goes so far in this direction as to deny the human nature of Christ's physical body: for the "material" cannot mediate Spirit. Marpeck, however, insisted that Christ's humanity had been glorified and had not lost its human nature. This glorified Christ in his transfigured body is not present in the Supper. Nevertheless, Christ is present in "both natures united in the Holy Spirit." In his humanity, Christ continues to work outwardly; in his divinity he works inwardly as Spirit. The ceremonies as outward signs are therefore important even though they do not mediate grace.

Dirk Philips was heir to a view of Christ mediated by Melchior Hoffmann very much akin to that of Schwenckfeld. This predisposed him to a Spiritualistic interpretation of the eucharist. But his later encounter with Sebastian Franck forced him to a new "defense of the outwardness of the Christian life." But this defense could not be based on his Christology; rather, it was based on his view of the visible church. The

two positions, Rempel argues, were never integrated by Philips.

Valuable as the study is, there are certain deficiencies that must be pointed out. First and foremost is the fact that the name of Erasmus is mentioned only once and then not in any important context. And yet, as one reads the writings of the radicals it has to become apparent that virtually everyone in those early years of the Reformation read Erasmus' Latin translation of the Bible with its Greek original; that they used his *Annotations*, published in various editions from 1516 onwards; and that they read his paraphrases of the various books of the New Testament beginning with the Gospels in 1522 and Acts in 1523. At the same time, Platonism and Mysticism had much in common, and what Rempel calls Spiritualistic influence may well have come from Erasmus. It is not accidental that both John Tauler and Petrarch could appeal to the same Platonic Augustine as the authority for their argument for a "divine spark" within—the fount of both mystical and humanistic positions. Denck is the classic example in the Radical Reformation to meld the two intellectual traditions. No wonder Pietists as well as Rationalists have been attracted to him. Not everything that resembles Spiritualism, especially in Zurich, has to come from Karlstadt or Thomas Muentzer. Indeed, the way in which Hubmaier, Grebel, Mantz, Marpeck, Menno, Dirk—yes, even Bernard Rothmann—interpret Christ's Great Commission with its implications for their view of baptism and the church, comes straight out of Erasmus. The view of Anabaptist origins from this perspective may well deal the polygenesis thesis a mortal wound.

Furthermore, in his attempt to set the above views of the eucharist into the larger Anabaptist context in his final chapter, Rempel omits to mention the Schleitheim Confession and the songs of the Anabaptists as sources for an Anabaptist view of the eucharist. Wachernagel, for example, in his *Das Deutsche Kirchenlied*, presents us with at least two Anabaptist songs dealing with the Lord's Supper: 1) Warer Verstand von des Herren Nachtmal; and 2) Vom Misbrauch des Nachtmahls. The *Ausbund* could probably present us with yet other songs dealing with the topic. Here one might really get a sense of the extent to which the ideas of Hubmaier, Marpeck, and Philips on the eucharist were representative of what was believed in early Anabaptism, or whether they were merely theological discourses with little relevance to the ordinary follower within Anabaptist ranks.

One last thing should be mentioned. It is a mistake to accept Joseph Lortz's description of the transition from Middle Ages to Renaissance and Reformation. Having studied with Lortz for two years at the Institute for European History in Mainz, Germany, I speak from experience. Especially his categories of "subjectivism, spiritualism, and laicism" have long since been superseded since they were clearly drawn from his Catholic perspective. As Calvin pointed out in his famous letter to Cardinal Jacopo Sadoleto, the Catholic Church was as "subjective" and "spiritualistic"—institutionally speaking—as any Spiritualist. Corporate subjectivity is every whit as subjective as individual subjectivity; and a great deal more tyrannical.

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Jacob W. Elias, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*. Believers Church Bible Commentary (Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1995). Pp. 400. ($19.95 — paperback) ISBN 0-8361-3698-5

The letters from Paul to the church in Thessalonica give us many insights into issues and challenges facing first century Christians. Jacob Elias encourages us to "eavesdrop" on these conversations. The idea of listening in to the conversation is an appropriate metaphor as he discusses how the themes that Paul addresses have been echoed throughout church history. He also includes many practical applications from the text for today. Elias meets the challenge of any Bible study: to bring the old conversation into a new context in meaningful ways. We listen in to the old conversation so that we may hear God's word for us today.

Elias's concern for the church today comes through most clearly in the sections "The Text in the Life of the Church." He often draws from his experiences in ministry as well as from other Anabaptist sources to give good applications to the text. Pastors and lay leaders will find his comments useful in areas such as sexuality, holiness, grief, suffering, and discipline. He challenges us to a healthy balance between progressive and conservative impulses at work within the church today. The traditions and practices of the past should serve as a foundation for seeking new avenues of involvement in our world today. The commentary is written in readable language. It will be found useful by both trained and those with limited training in biblical studies.

The author's use of sentence-flow diagrams helps to open meanings in the text. The diagrams are relatively simple and compact with the purpose of showing the flow of ideas and logic in the writer's mind. Anyone using this commentary should not overlook the "Essays" section at the end of the volume. In it the author discusses methodologies as well as general and specific background to Paul's letters to the Thessalonians. Along with a good bibliography this section gives the reader tools to dig even deeper in search of biblical understanding. "Eavesdropping and digging" are two responses to the text to which Jacob Elias challenges us. His commentary makes both of these responses possible.

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E. J. Furcha, trans. and ed., *The Essential Carlstadt: Fifteen Tracts*. (Classics of the Radical Reformation; 8) Scottdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1995. Pp. 449. ($49.95) ISBN 0-8361-3116-9

Andreas Bodenstein (Carlstadt) from Karlstadt was a professor at the University of Wittenberg and Luther's colleague during the early years of the Reformation. Carlstadt was second only to Luther in the number of tracts he published in the opening years of the Reformation. After 1522 Carlstadt and Luther came into conflict and Carlstadt moved into the Radical Reformation. Carlstadt disagreed with Luther over the speed with which images should be removed from the churches and the traditional Mass abolished. Carlstadt denied Christ's "Real Presence" in the Lord's Supper. Carlstadt began to dress in simple peasant clothing and he rejected all of his academic honors, including his title of "Doctor." Carlstadt tried to create his own version of the Reformation in the town of Orlamünde, but he was forced to

leave because of pressure from Luther. Although Carlstadt was not an Anabaptist, he questioned infant baptism and influenced many Anabaptists, such as Conrad Grebel and Melchior Hoffman, as well as other figures in the Radical Reformation.

Carlstadt's works are not easy to find even in sixteenth century German versions, so Ed Furcha's translation of fifteen tracts by Carlstadt is especially welcomed. *The Essential Carlstadt* contains a good cross-section of Carlstadt's writings; the translations are both accurate and readable. The selections cover a wide range of topics and contain both devotional works and polemical writings. To the modern reader, Carlstadt's 1522 tract, "On the Removal of Images and That There Should Be No Beggars among Christians," may at first seem to be an odd combination of iconoclasm and poor relief, but for Carlstadt the poor are the true "images" of Christ therefore money should not be spent on the false "images" or icons. Furcha achieves a well-balanced, nuanced translation of the term *Gelassenheit*, a central concept of Carlstadt's devotional works. The word *Gelassenheit* was borrowed from the fourteenth century German mystics and it meant the replacement of self-will with the will of God in one's life. Other works by Carlstadt were contributions to the great debates of the early years of the Reformation, including discussions on the validity of clerical vows of chastity, the cult of the Saints, and the nature of Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper.

Carlstadt frequently quoted from the Bible very freely or inaccurately and Furcha has done a good job of explaining the biblical references in his notes to the texts. Furcha's explanation of the historical context of the works and identification of various historical references was less strong. One glaring error was the identification of a reference to Pope Gregory and his saying that images were the books of the lay persons (p. 106). Furcha incorrectly identified Pope Gregory as Pope Gregory VII (1073-1085) (p. 405, note 10; p. 411, note 27); Carlstadt was referring to a saying of Pope Gregory I the Great (590-604). In another place Carlstadt complained about people going on pilgrimages to "Rome, Jacob, and Jerusalem" (p. 92); the reference to "Jacob" should have been translated as "Santiago." This reviewer could add one correction to the biblical references. Carlstadt referred to the Thessalonians searching the Scripture to verify what the Apostle Paul had preached to them (p. 91); Furcha identified this as a reference to I Thess. 5:21 (p. 404, note 46) when it is almost certainly a reference to Acts 17:2.

These mistakes are rather minor and do not really detract from the quality of this translation and the usefulness of this book for students of the Reformation. Moreover, Carlstadt's biblical arguments for helping the poor or his justification of his simple life style will have a certain timeless appeal.

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Horst Gerlach, *Mein Reich ist nicht von dieser Welt: 300 Jahre Amische 1693-1993*. Kirchheimbolanden: Gerlach, 1993. Pp. 272.

Mein Reich ist nicht von dieser Welt was written by Dr. Horst Gerlach to help commemorate the 300-year history of the Amish. Gerlach, a retired history instructor

living in the village of Weierhof, Germany, has authored several previous works related to Mennonite history. In this particular volume the author sketches the European origins of the Anabaptists before moving into the actual 1693 schism involving Jakob Ammann which led to the development of the Amish.

The major contribution of this volume to Amish, Mennonite and Anabaptist history lies in its presentation of many obscure primary sources gathered from church records, historical archives and personal collections. The drawings, photographs, charts, receipts and other records selected from state and city archives present a comprehensive history of the Amish in various European locations. The history of Amish congregations that were located in Alsace, Lorraine, Luxemburg, Saarland, the Palatinate, Hesse, Baden-Württemberg, and Bavaria is traced in such detail as to provide both the historian and the genealogist, fluent in German, with valuable insight into the life of these diverse congregations. Of particular interest to the genealogist is the inclusion of the history of traditional Amish families and their settlements or farms. In many respects this volume is a history of the Amish in Europe. The author traces the evolution of the Amish in a European context—development, practices, emigration, assimilation, and finally, dissipation. Evidence is provided of the continued influence of the Amish upon church and community life even after the disappearance of individual congregations.

Perhaps most surprising to this reviewer is the limited coverage allotted to the Amish in America, 15 pages, especially since the rather folksy cover design—Fraktur, a barn raising, a ship crossing the Atlantic in 1752 and a covered wagon destined for Ohio—depicts Amish life in America. Although the history of the Amish in America is not limited to the final sections of the book, earlier references are presented in an anecdotal, stream-of-consciousness fashion, rather than in a systematic manner. An illustration of this style is the author's historic discussion of the Schwarzentruber family in Waldeck, Germany, with a digression describing his own 1988 visit with bishop Clayton Swartzendruber at Christopher Dock Mennonite School.

Most disconcerting to this reviewer were the numerous errors contained in this volume. Although the author begs the reader's forgiveness for errors that may exist in this self-publication, the lack of careful proofreading and the subsequent errors cause the careful scholar to question the historical accuracy and credibility of the entire volume. The errors range from spelling (Iniana instead of Indiana on p. 4), to dates (1683 in the table of contents, 1663 on page 23, instead of the correct 1693 date of the schism), to organizational (the author moves from point 1 to point 3 on page 23), to factual (one citation indicates that Christian Schlabach came to Lohe around 1720 and had at least 5 sons, when a family tree compiled in Germany and in the reviewer's possession indicates 1735 as the date and lists 8 sons).

This volume best serves the initiated reader who is capable of appreciating and using the breadth of material presented for further research, rather than the uninitiated who might be confused by the seeming lack of narrative thread, unique lay-out of the volume and the author's digressions into a favorite topic, World War II. Regardless of the criticisms cited, the author should be commended for his attempt at drawing together so many strands of Amish history within the European context and

making them available to others interested in the origins, life and contributions of the Amish.

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Carl F. Bowman, *Brethren Society: The Cultural Transformation of a "Peculiar People."* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995. Pp. 491. ($65.00) ISBN 0-8018-4904-7

A Mennonite, who was raised in the Shenandoah Valley where folk could observe their neighbors across the hills, once shared with me a warning he received from his elders: "See those Brethren. They used to be like us. Watch out or you are going to be like them!" Written by one who retains Dunker roots in this beautiful valley, *Brethren Society* deals with the same enigmatic phenomena. How and why would a later Anabaptist Gemeinschaft assimilate faster than its Amish and Mennonite cousins?

Carl Bowman is better in delineating the how than in answering the why of this puzzling question. It is evident that he wants to challenge all of us to discern why we are where we are today. Why do we struggle as we do with a sense of lost identity? He does this by sharing data and reflections from his extensive historical research and sociological questionnaires. Unlike many sociological tomes, his literary style is superb. The book reads like an engaging novel. Analytical sentences are cleverly crafted, often beautifully stated. This substantive scholarly book is being widely used in church school classes and favorably received by various groups in the church.

His work focuses most intensely on twentieth century changes in the Church of the Brethren, the largest extension of the Dunker movement. Most of the changes and issues are easily recognized by Mennonites—such as in attitudes about dress, temperance, military service, ordinances, salaried ministry, higher education, missions, revivals, church discipline, musical instruments, and holding public office.

Bowman acknowledges his biases about the old Brethren. Since Donald Kraybill was his mentor in college, I chidingly place Bowman in the Kraybillian golden rule school of sociology, one which wishes to understand the Amish and other plain groups as we would want others to understand us. I have often imbibed the same spirit in reaction to the propensity in Brethren circles to confess the sins of our grandparents instead of our own. However, such an attitude can easily disregard data and history which might cast a more negative light on our forefathers.

Some critics of Bowman's analyses wish that he might have extended the same empathy to some of the twentieth century agents of change. Though he did not demonize those who led efforts for change, he obviously holds them responsible for our loss of identity, unity, and manifestations of nonconformity.

I have the most difficulty with the way Bowman appropriates the time line of Brethren history. He takes less than one-fifth of his book, the first ninety-two pages, to give an overview of traditional Dunker culture from 1708-1850. Such can be justified because the preponderance of his research was devoted to changes in the last part of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century. His extensive surveys of grass roots Brethren were not done until recent decades.

The problem emerges when he formulates the essence of who the Brethren were in the 1850s as the primary paradigm from which to

narrate Brethren change. In doing so, he minimizes more than I do how much nineteenth century Brethren had deviated from their colonial progenitors. Brethren who were immersed in mystical pietism with emphases on the inner light were culturally transformed to become more evangelical and legalistic. Increasing numbers constrained house church informality to be replaced by rules of order in new meeting houses. Participation by colonial Brethren in civic and ecumenical affairs diminished on the American frontier. The same dynamic abated participation by women in worship and other Christians in the Love Feast. Simplicity of dress of the early Brethren was replaced by an insistence on conforming to an established order. For many Brethren baptism was transformed into a salvation rite, an insurance policy for eternity more than a beginning of discipleship and ministry with others in the community of faith.

However, it was logical for nineteenth century Brethren, who were scattered in the western movement, to embrace outward symbols of identity. Caricatures of sectarian withdrawal are not fair as the Brethren were busy forming new communities and evangelizing their neighbors through love feasts and school house debates. Many settled literally in the wilderness. But they were a part of the epochal expansion and development of a new nation. And we can be proud that they refused to kill native Americans and constituted one of the first anti-slavery groups.

By overlooking substantive changes before 1850, Bowman may lack a realistic assessment of his beginning paradigm. Brethren had already been tossed to and fro by many winds of doctrine, including premillenialism, "methodistic tendencies," and revivalism along with many manifestations of acculturation. We lost over a hundred congregations in Kentucky and neighboring states to the Campbellites. Sizeable numbers in North Carolina, Missouri, and other states of the far west defected or were expelled by the Brethren because of their universalist sentiments.

In the 1850s Henry Kurtz compiled the first collection of Annual Meeting decisions in what he named *The Brethren Encyclopedia*. Both the kind and frequency of the issues they dealt with reveal both disobedience to and changes in lifestyle and doctrinal decisions. In his introduction Kurtz describes the varieties of Brethren in their attitudes about the minutes. He wrote that some regard the minutes as sacred and binding laws of God. This view was embodied by the Old Orders who in 1881 formed the Old German Baptist Brethren. He added that others regard the minutes as little more than the vain traditions of men. These constituted the later 1882 Progressive Brethren. What surprised me most in Kurtz's analysis was his own view of the Annual Meeting minutes. In stating that they were neither laws of God nor mere traditions of men, he defined them as "a solemn act of renewing our covenant, into which one of us entered when we made a public confession of our faith." Though he no doubt held to communal disciplines more than contemporary Brethren, his analysis may be proleptic of the present status of Annual Conference decisions. In the twentieth century, conference actions have generally not been binding. At the same time they are not easily dismissed by serious members as having little importance. Rather, in voting, listening, speaking in the context of worship and many unifying events, Brethren air differences, celebrate

agreements, and commit themselves to processes which strengthen their covenant to remain together.

Though there remain continuities, Bowman discerns major cultural transformations in departures from our heritage emphases of obedience, accountability, separation from the world and a biblical hermeneutic which sought to discern the mind of Christ. He illustrates this by featuring the life and ministry of Martin G. Brumbaugh (1862-1930). Brumbaugh wrote the first substantial history with interpretations congenial to changes advocated by progressives. Gaining widespread recognition from involvements in educational endeavors, Brumbaugh was elected governor of Pennsylvania in 1914. Many Brethren were concerned that Brumbaugh defied historic Brethren rulings against holding public office which required him to draft Brethren men and oversee production of military supplies during World War I. Many others admired a brother who attained high office, who had been active in supporting missions, and after leaving public office returned to serve the Brethren through a second term as president of Juniata College.

Brumbaugh articulated a philosophy of history which was popular with pioneer Brethren educators. They believed most colonial Brethren to be educated, active in civic affairs, and involved in establishing the first Sunday Schools. Persecution and westward movement led to wilderness manifestations of sectarian withdrawal. They preached that progressive changes such as educational enterprises could restore the cultural sophistication of the first Brethren.

I have identified with the revisionist historiography which has critiqued the oversimplified philosophy of the educators. In fact, many of the early Brethren were simple peasants. Nevertheless, Christopher Sower, Jr., a Brethren elder and publisher of German books and educational materials, was very much involved in public affairs. Though the nineteenth century educational pioneers overdid it, there was some justification in citing the activity and beliefs of early Brethren to support more progressive programs.

Likewise, Bowman echoes contemporary Brethren historiography in challenging Brumbaugh's affirmation of "no force in religion" as a basic presupposition to Brethren life and thought. Even more questionable has been how this motto along with noncreedalism has been appropriated in the twentieth century. Originally the aphorism, if used at all, constituted a rationale to justify a church born in civil disobedience to a state which enforced absolute conformity to the established church. Bowman identifies it as a phrase which affirmed principles of religious freedom and separation of church and state. In the twentieth century the saying has been used to contend that every Christian should not be subject to anyone or any belief that shackles individual conscience. The early exterior emphasis has been used to espouse individualistic discernment apart from others and the glorification of diversity in the community of faith.

Again, Bowman's critique induces me to critique this now standard critique. It is true that "no force in religion—noncreedalist" stances were in reaction to the state's enforcement of religious and ecclesiastical uniformity by persecuting those who formed volunteer communities of believers. In addition to their reaction to the state, however, Pietists advocated

persuasive love as the way to deal with religious disputes. In their milieu they exhibited unusual openness to reform movements within Roman Catholicism and the Reformed tradition, and their own Lutheran tradition. Stephen Longenecker in a recent book, *Piety and Tolerance: Pennsylvania German Religion, 1700-1850* (Scarecrow Press, 1994), substantiates how early colonial Brethren along with many others in the pluralized commonwealth contributed to the American idea of tolerance. I believe there is evidence that convictions applied to exterior forces were embodied in their inner and congregational lives. Discipline was both justified and carried out in the spirit of love. When Brethren were not clear about biblical directions, they were to bear with one another in patience and love.

For this reason I believe that Bowman's assertion that "the reconstitution of Brethren culture . . . was not the work of conservatives; it was the handiwork of twentieth-century liberal modernism" (p. 405) at best represents half the story. Some of the changes were likely due to the legacy of the love theology of the Pietists, applications of the idea of religious freedom leading to less coercion in congregational life, and the desire to "do good unto all men" (see early Brethren card, p. 187).

And might some of the blame or credit for change rest with conservatives who often engaged in discipline without love and "neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith" (Mt. 23:23)? Bowman does grant that both conservatives and liberals have acculturated, though to different influences. Some conservatives, who logically have been attracted to fundamentalism and evangelical theology because of the emphasis on biblical authority, have espoused rigid dogmatic doctrinal schemes which violate the "no creed but the New Testament" affirmations of our heritage. Brethren attracted to liberal and liberation theologies have discerned congenial heritage emphases in the focus on the life and teaching of Jesus and compassionate concerns for justice for the poor. And some have been guilty of distortions that translate our noncreedal heritage "into an ultratolerant and individualistic discipleship, totally devoid of personal or collective coherence" (p. 416).

A superb sociologist, who strives to be as fair as possible, Bowman quotes articles for and against changes from disparate voices from the historical past. In his final chapters, however, some of his own biases are honestly stated. In some instances his own concerns are revealed in his selectivity of quotes. This was especially true in the way he dealt with the 1979 Annual Conference document on "Biblical Inspiration and Authority." Endorsed by an overwhelming vote of the delegates, the paper reaffirmed "our historic understanding of scripture as the infallible rule of faith and practice." A later section entitled "Holding One Another in Love and Fellowship" was added because the committee discerned that the church was far from agreement on issues related to biblical inerrancy.

Appendix A of Bowman's study is entitled "A Chronology of Change." The following last entry of the four pages of dates and changes was derived from the above conference action:

1979 Annual Conference paper on biblical Inspiration and authority embraces diversity as God's pattern in creation and endorses "unity in diversity" as a basic Brethren principle (p. 423).

On page 363 Bowman had earlier made the case that Brethren had shifted from finding "unity in

similarity" to proclaiming "unity in diversity" by giving extensive quotes from the final reconciling efforts of the conference paper. He failed to emphasize a decision that represented a remarkable consensus relating to biblical authority. He granted that the statement conceded that "Christian freedom does not imply an unchecked individualism." But he ignored and deleted the strong Anabaptist correction that followed:

However, Christian freedom does not imply an unchecked individualism. Our Anabaptist heritage teaches that no one enters the kingdom apart from brothers and sisters. It is within the community of believers and for their upbuilding that the Spirit is given, and those who walk in the Spirit are called on to work toward ". . . being in full accord and of one mind . . . to have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus . . ." Philippians 2: 2, 5

I believe that this passage offers a balance Bowman seems to affirm in his concluding chapters.

In light of my responses, I will attempt to risk a few reasons why Brethren have assimilated more than Mennonites. My incomplete historical hunches are as follows: from their beginnings Brethren imbibed a Pietist love theology that was destined to soften and erode church discipline; bad experiences with creeds conditioned Brethren to maintain an uneasiness about adopting even confessions of faith common with the Mennonites; lacking the severity of persecution and memories of the same, Brethren have never been as suspicious of culture or mainline Protestantism; the heritage of early universalist tendencies have led Brethren to lack realistic views of human nature. Moreover, influential twentieth century Brethren leaders such as M. R. Zigler and Dan West were strongly influenced by Quakers and others to imbibe liberal motifs described by Bowman though from my perspective savored with a strong Dunker flavor. As is true of most movements and persons, the above story reveals how strengths can easily become liabilities.

The above hunches may augment historical interpretations of Mennonite-Brethren relationships. In colonial America (1720-1776) many Mennonites converted to the new zealous group; in the early decades of the twentieth century, many Mennonites transferred their membership so they could retain basic values in a less restrictive and disciplined community; in the last few decades, many Brethren, especially younger members like Carl Bowman, have been attracted to, some converting to Mennonite congregations, because they have found greater faithfulness to the way and authority of Jesus and expressions of communitarian ecclesiology.

In spite of my reservations about 1850 normative Brethrenism, Bowman's extraordinary, well written and researched book, will likely serve for decades as a rich resource. It will help Brethren discern how to hold fast to what is good while maintaining openness to the new as we continue together to test new winds of doctrinal and cultural intrusions by the Bible, our tradition, and the mind of Christ.

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Donald R. Fitzkee, *Moving toward the Mainstream: 20th Century Change among the Brethren of Eastern Pennsylvania*. Intercourse, Pa.: Good

Books, 1995. Pp. 347. ($9.95 — paperback) ISBN 1-56148-170-X

As one who is interested in cultural and religious changes, I am particularly appreciative of Fitzkee's analysis of the Church of the Brethren experience in Eastern Pennsylvania. In the Foreword, Donald B. Kraybill notes that wave after wave of change has transformed American life in the 20th century. While all American peoples have been affected by the forces of modernity, sectarian communities who hoped to maintain cultural boundaries between themselves and modern society faced particular challenges. Over the last ninety years of encounter with modernity, the Church of the Brethren has lost much of its unique religious identity.

Fitzkee analyzes both the changes that have come about among the Brethren and the consequences of those changes. He gives little attention to the technological forces of modernity, such as the advent of the automobile for transportation. Instead, he is primarily interested in the religious forces that moved the Brethren from a strictly sectarian people to eager participants in mainstream Protestantism, including national and world ecumenism. He cites various factors in the streams of influence that swept Brethren along—the theological debates surrounding the fundamentalist-liberal controversy, the advent of Sunday Schools, the development of Revival Meetings and mission outreaches, as well as the rise of church-related educational institutions.

Fitzkee's volume grows out of original research conducted among the 67 churches and fellowships of the Atlantic Northeast District. The survey instrument was modeled after a 1986 survey used by Fitzkee and Donald Kraybill in a comparative study of the Church of the Brethren, Lancaster Mennonite Conference, and Old Order Amish congregations in Lancaster County. The earlier study asserted that in the late 1800s, the above three groups were so similar as to be practically indistinguishable to the average "outsider," or nonsectarian person. Over the period of a century, the divergences that have grown among these same groups is astonishing. The Amish, of course, have manifested the least apparent cultural change while the Brethren have exhibited the most cultural adaptation to modern culture, with the Lancaster Mennonites somewhere in between.

Fitzkee's current volume discusses in considerable detail the most significant changes that the Brethren experienced over the past nine decades. Readers from the Amish and Mennonite traditions, as well as other non-Brethren, will recognize similarities with the issues that Brethren faced as they struggled with the forces of modernity.

Among the changes discussed by Fitzkee are 1) the erosion of Brethren distinctives such as baptism by trine immersion and the traditional two-day Love Feast, 2) the move from free to salaried ministry, 3) the dramatic shift of organizational patterns and growth of church bureaucracy, 4) the crumbling wall of separation in lifestyle and patterns of dress between Brethren and the "world," 5) the decline and practical disappearance of corporate discipline, 6) the growing participation of Brethren as citizens of the state, 7) the abandonment of "nonresistance" in favor of military participation or "peacemaking" activities, 8) the growing ecumenism and increasing diversity of beliefs and practice among the Brethren churches, and 9) the move in some

congregations from simple worship in "meetinghouses" to highly liturgical services in elaborate corporate plants. At the beginning of this century, these changes took place in spite of heated debate and resistance at Annual Conference, the "clearinghouse" for Brethren life and polity. By the second half of the century, Annual Conference was a leading proponent of change. Ecumenical concerns and a desire for contemporary relevance led the bureaucratic leadership of the denomination to outstrip many of the local congregations in the rate of religious and cultural change. From Fitzkee's point of view, many of the organizational changes came from the top down rather than rising from the bottom up. Nevertheless, he admits that the rising educational level of the laity was a decisive factor in the calling of clergy who had been trained in the denominational seminary. These pastors in turn became agents of accelerated change on the local level.

Fitzkee makes it clear that change has not been uniform among the Brethren churches. From the beginning of the century, congregations in urban areas tended to push the frontiers of change, while rural fellowships held back. In Fitzkee's final chapter, he compares and contrasts two congregations that symbolize the range of beliefs and practice now evident in the region. There is currently a kaleidoscope of congregations in the district, including fellowships of persons from various ethnic and racial groups. Indicative of the cultural transformation is the largely African-American congregation that now worships in the 1770 "mother church," the grave site of Brethren founder Alexander Mack. The small remnant of the original congregation in the racially changing neighborhood disbanded, then merged with a nearby urban church in the mid-1960s.

Fitzkee's volume evidences careful research, complete with an index, bibliography, and two appendices. A number of maps, diagrams, and tables bring helpful clarity to the text. However, sprinkled with citations made by Brethren throughout the century, the book more closely approximates a Sunday afternoon chat than a university lecture. Even the abundance of notes tucked away toward the end of the book make lively reading. Far from being bored by this book, I found myself invigorated by Fitzkee's lively use of language, particularly his fertile metaphors describing church life.

Fitzkee is not an unbiased observer. As a minister in one of the few Brethren congregations that have retained the pattern of free ministry, he is particularly alert to the changes that a salaried ministry have brought to the denomination. He lays the responsibility for some of the Brethren cultural transformation at the feet of "hirelings"—salaried ministers who accelerated the rate of change in the church. In several places throughout the book, I sensed a muted lament for the death of authoritative leadership by homegrown preachers, deacons, and elders. Nevertheless, Fitzkee's passion and point of view contribute to, rather than detract from, his astute social and religious analysis. He holds the historical mirror steady enough that contemporary Brethren can see themselves quite clearly.

I wish to commend Fitzkee for a highly readable treatise on cultural transformation. I recommend this book for anyone who wishes to have more "handles" for understanding religious and cultural change among sectarian groups. Persons with a passion for church renewal will find help here just as readily as the historian who wishes to document

specific changes in religious practice. While Fitzkee would not likely recommend a return to many of the practices of the past, he reveals a deep passion for the essence of Christian faith as understood by Brethren at the turn of the century. Those who long to see renewal in the Church of the Brethren may well find the seeds for dynamic transformation lying dormant in the soil of their heritage. In the same way, non-Brethren readers will be challenged to examine their own histories. A careful look at one's own past can serve as a helpful guide to the future. Fitzkee helps point the way.

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Alastair Hamilton, Sjouke Voolstra, and Piet Visser, eds., *From Martyr to Muppy: A Historical Introduction to Assimilation Processes of a Religious Minority in the Netherlands:* The Mennonites. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1994. Pp. 243 ($29.50 — paperback) ISBN 90-5356-060-2

The clever title catches our interest. Martyrs we know of, but "Muppy" may need a bit of definition. The title page adds the note, "Mennonite Urban Professionals." The subtitle spells out the main theme of the fifteen essays "assimilation of a religious minority (Dutch Mennonites) into the larger society. The book contains three main sections. Part One, "Historical Settings and Divergent Perspectives," has chapters by Alastair Hamilton, Sjouke Voolstra, Otto de Jong, Simon Verheus, and Edmund Kizik. Part Two, "Mennonite Pragmatism in Everyday Life: Aspects of Early Cultural and Socio-Economic-Assimilation," has chapters by Piet Visser, Marijke Spies, Louis Peter Grijp, Mary Sprunger, and Bert Westera. Part Three, "Changing Theological and Ideological Patters: Towards Intellectual 'Muppy-ism'," has chapters by Andrew Fix, Jelle Bosma, Sjouke Voolstra, and Anton van der Lem.

The book comes from Dutch Mennonite history, but there is a wider application. Comparable studies could be done for every country where Mennonites live, and the story could be very similar. Are Mennonites citizens of heaven? Or citizens of the nation? Or both?

Sjouke Voolstra's chapter "'The Colony of Heaven': The Anabaptist Aspiration to be a Church without Spot or Wrinkle in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," provides an excellent context in which to consider the basic themes of separation and assimilation. Mennonites began their existence facing martyrdom. If Christians are to be a pure church "without spot or wrinkle," a discipline of separation works best. Toleration and acceptance occurred. After a couple of centuries, the Doopsgezinden, as they came to be called, turned into respected good people doing many good works—"solid, Dutch citizens." (p. 29) Edmund Kizik in his chapter on Mennonites in Danzig and the Vistula Delta tells a similar story. By the end of his chapter, twentieth-century German Mennonites "simply became Germans of Mennonite faith." (p. 62)

Part Two, on cultural, social, and economic assimilation, presents interesting accounts of Mennonite involvement in literature, music, and the arts. Here we learn about intellectual and cultural Mennonites, such as Karel van Mander, Joost van den Vondel, and Jan Philipsz

Schabaelje. Piet Visser's chapters demonstrate how Mennonites moved into the intellectual life of the Republic, convinced that the arts could advance biblical truth and ethics. The Mennonite writer or artist could bring a moral benefit to church and society. (p. 71) Along a different line, Mary Sprunger wrote about economic entrepreneurs in "Waterlanders and the Dutch Golden Age." The seventeenth-century Waterlander Mennonites were at the center of business; the church allowed a wide range of business occupations but drew the line at investing or manning ships that were armed with cannons. "Aside from this one limitation, the Waterlander ēlite was free to participate in all areas of commerce." (p. 140) Some Mennonites, but by no means all, became very wealthy.

The final section, intellectual developments, deals with Mennonite intellectuals from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries. Andrew Fix tells about the Collegiants and the growth of rationalism. Anton van der Lem, in the final chapter of the book, described two twentieth-century Mennonite historians, Johan Huizinga and Jan Romein.

These papers were originally presented at the University of Amsterdam in the summer of 1992. Most authors were from the Netherlands. A collection of essays by diverse authors will always be a bit disjointed. Still, every one of the chapters has some interesting themes that could stand by themselves. The overall theme of separation or assimilation can be traced throughout. However, after the first few chapters, the theme of church separation and perfection faded, and the story of Mennonite assimilation and achievement prevailed. Is there a larger theological and moral meaning? Voolstra in his chapters was the most consistent in keeping the overall theme of the book—martyrdom or muppiedom—at the fore. Who faces the greatest challenge of faith, he asked, the Christian facing martyrdom? Or the urban Mennonite facing a world indifferent to God and the Christian religion? (p. 201) For anyone with an interest in the way that past Mennonites have engaged politics and culture, this book will provide food for thought.

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