



*News from the*

EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED HISTORICAL SOCIETY

November 1974

Volume 2, No. 3

#### REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

The Historical Commission of the United Church of Christ held its second meeting of the year on October 7th and 8th, 1974 at Lancaster, Pa. in the Archival Room of the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society, Lancaster Theological Seminary. Long working sessions were held that reported on the progress of the program priorities which were established at the March 21-22 meeting and were reported in detail in the February-May, 1974, issue of NEWS from the Congregational Christian Historical Society.

The Commission has published two leaflets "Celebrate Anniversaries in Your Local Church" and "The Local Church Historian" for free distribution. Copies may be secured by writing to the executive secretaries of the Historical Societies or to the archivist of the United Church of Christ, George H. Bricker, 555 W. James St. Lancaster, Pa., 17603. Ten copies will be sent to each conference minister with the suggestion that they reproduce them and send them to their congregations.

Dr. Jack Yates reported for the Executive Council of the U.C.C. that for the budget year 1975, the Commission will not be granted any funds to hold meetings. \$400 has been allocated for the chairman of the Commission, Dr. Lowell H. Zuck, to attend the meeting of the General Synod. The Commission was quite distressed that no funds would be available to continue their work next year, and recommended that Dr. Zuck attend the next meeting of the Executive Council to present and explain the work of the Historical Commission.

The executive secretaries and the archivist were instructed to develop a portable historical exhibit that could be exhibited at General Synod and at Conference meetings. The sum of \$350 was allocated for this purpose. Other official actions included motions to explore with the United Church Press and the Division of Evangelism, Church Extension and Education of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries the need and market for pamphlets on Congregational Christian history, Evangelical and Reformed history, and United Church of Christ traditions; to request Dr. Evans, the Secretary of the Church, to place a list of added, dropped and merged Churches with the Archivist; to cooperate with A.D. magazine in compiling a basic listing of publications on United Church of Christ history; that the Historical Commission recognizes the importance of the national Bicentennial celebration and will work with other UCC agencies and instrumentalities in helping the event in Conferences, Associations, and local churches.

The Oral History Task Force reported that they have begun their work. Volunteer interviewers will be used and the names of possible interviewees and interviewers should be forwarded to Dr. Buchman, Defiance College. The Journal Task Force will consider compiling a "diary" or chronicle of events in the life of the United Church of Christ. Dr. Penner was asked to serve on the Task Force.

The executive secretaries of the two societies submitted written reports of the work of the Societies. Copies may be secured by writing to them. It was reported that the Historical Commission Appeal raised \$5,103.50 during 1973.



111th ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY

The 111th annual meeting of the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society was held at Ursinus College, November 13, 1974. Dr. William T. Parsons of the Department of History of the college hosted the meeting which was attended by about thirty people. Representatives from the four Pennsylvania Conferences who are meeting regularly to coordinate programs and to cooperate with each other and the Society in the celebration of the two Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary of the First Communion Service at Falkner Swamp and the Bicentennial Celebration of the United States were present.

During the business session reports were heard from the officers of the Society. Summaries of them will be found in this NEWS.

The program consisted of a workshop to discuss plans for the two historical celebrations which will occur in 1975-76. Dr. John C. Shetler, Minister of the Pennsylvania South East Conference, led a discussion of plans that are underway for the celebration of the 250th Anniversary of the First Communion at Falkner Swamp. It was on October 15, 1725 that a group of German settlers under the guidance of John Philip Boehm gathered in a community known as Falkner Swamp, three miles south of Gilbertsville, Pa. to organize the first German Reformed congregation in the United States. Although it is known that German Reformed people gathered for worship much earlier, this first communion service is cited as the founding of the German Reformed Church in the United States, a denomination that is now a constituent body of the United Church of Christ.

The Pennsylvania South East Conference has planned an elaborate celebration in which other conferences will participate. The main celebration will be on October 15, 1975 at Falkner Swamp Church. Details of the celebrations will be announced to all our churches.

George H. Bricker distributed a preliminary draft of "An Order for the Lord's Supper Celebrating the 250th Anniversary of the First Communion....Held at Falkner Swamp, October 15, 1725, adapted from the Palatinate Liturgy of 1563," for consideration of the workshop. It was this service that was used by our early German Reformed people. It was decided to print and distribute the Palatinate Liturgy with Historical Notes to congregations that wished to join in the celebration. The cost will be shared by the Conferences and the Society.

Some concern was expressed in the general discussions that there seemed to be no planned denominational recognition by the United Church of Christ of this 250th anniversary which is so significant in the Reformed tradition. It was agreed that a letter be addressed to the President and Secretary of the UCC and the Chairman of the Executive Council stating "that the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society expresses the hope that adequate provision will be made in the program of the Tenth General Synod for recognition of this Reformed anniversary; and would profoundly regret as it believes its constituency would profoundly regret if this were not done, and if the denomination in other ways failed to encourage general observance of the anniversary."

Dr. Lowell H. Zuck, Chairman of the Historical Commission led a discussion of the plans for the celebration of the Bicentennial of the United States. He said that the denominational observance plans were being made by a committee of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries and that the Historical Commission and the Society would cooperate in whatever ways were possible. Dr. Powers of the UCBHM has announced that a meeting will be held in Philadelphia, January 21-22 to discuss the Bicentennial observance.



At the last annual meeting the Society voted to set aside \$1,000 from the Arcadia Foundation gift to encourage publication of material celebrating the beginnings of the German Reformed Church in Pennsylvania. The Society voted to grant the \$1,000 to Dr. William T. Parsons who is currently doing research on "Contributions of the Reformed People to the Founding of the Nation." It is hoped that the result of the research will be published.

The following officers were elected for the coming year: President, Rev. George H. Bricker; First Vice-President, Dr. Lowell H. Zuck; Second Vice-President, Dr. Philip W. Weiss; Third Vice-President, Dr. James E. Wagner; Secretary, Dr. Rudolf G. Schade; Treasurer, Mr. Myron E. Wolf; Executive Secretary, Dr. Herbert B. Anstaett.

#### RESOLUTION ON THE DEATH OF CHARLES DEWEY SPOTTS

The Reverend Dr. Charles Dewey Spotts ably served the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society in several capacities, as a long-time member of its Executive Committee, as its Treasurer from December 1940 through June 1966, and as its President from 1965 until his death on December 26, 1973.

On October 29, 1963, Dr. Spotts delivered the address on the occasion of the Centennial Celebration of the Society in the Santee Chapel, Lancaster Theological Seminary, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, entitled THE BIRTH OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE REFORMED CHURCH. This essay was subsequently published by the Society as a fourteen page pamphlet.

With the limited funds available during his connection with the Society, he assisted in guiding it through stringent times and thereby helped to make it possible to collect and preserve the rich heritage of the Reformed Church in the United States and its successors, and to make it available to scholars and others interested in it.

The Executive Committee at its meeting on April 23, 1974 (its first meeting since the death of Dr. Spotts) authorized that a Memorial Resolution be prepared reflecting his service and contribution to the Society, to be presented at its next annual meeting in the fall of 1974.

Be it resolved that this resolution be made a part of the official minutes of the annual meeting and that copies be sent to his widow, Lucy Musselman Spotts, and two daughters, Mary Jane, wife of Dexter D. Merrill, Claremont, California, and Nancy Lou, wife of R. Eugene Bare, Bird-in-Hand, Pennsylvania.

#### NOTES

John W. Mueller, LL.D., Esquire, St. Louis, Missouri, died April 26, 1974. He was a life member of the Society and was active in the affairs of the General Council of the Evangelical and Reformed Church.

The Treasurer's Report for the calendar year, 1974, will be published in the March issue of the NEWS.

#### REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, DR. HERBERT B. ANSTAETT

The office of the Executive Secretary is located in the suite of the Lancaster Central Archives of the Society on the second floor of the Philip Schaff Library of the Lancaster Theological Seminary, 555 West James Street, Lancaster, Pa. 17603. Five and one-half years ago the move was made from the Fackenthal Library of



Franklin and Marshall College where most of the activities of the Society had been carried on for thirty-one years, i.e., since 1938. The Library, known as the Lancaster Central Archives and Library, which presently includes the Archives of the United Church of Christ as the officially designated depository for such material, was moved during the summer of 1967 when the Schaff Library was occupied. Previous to 1938 the Society and its Library were housed at the Seminary. The Eden Archives and Library, consisting in large part of Evangelical Synod of North America material, is housed in separate quarters in the library at Eden Theological Seminary, Webster Groves, Missouri. There is also archival material housed at Catawba College, Salisbury, North Carolina, and the Southern Chapter of the Society is in the process of having this collection cataloged.

The essay prepared and read by Dr. Fred D. Wentzel at last year's annual meeting of the Society, held at the Schaff Building, Philadelphia, has recently been published and distributed to the membership. It is entitled THE FORGING OF A DENOMINATION with a sub-title UNITIVE FORCES IN THE HISTORY OF THE GERMAN REFORMED CHURCHES IN THE UNITED STATES. A copy is attached to this report. Copies are for sale at fifty cents each. Two issues of NEWS from the EVANGELICAL AND REFORMED HISTORICAL SOCIETY were also sent to the members during the report year. They were labeled as volume 2, no. 1, March 1974, and volume 2, no. 2, September 1974. The latter issue was mailed with the Wentzel essay. Both numbers were edited by Dean Bricker.

The Historical Commission of the United Church of Christ, has sent out an annual financial appeal for the past nine years to the Church mailing list of pastors and others, including this year for the first time the lay members as listed in the Lay Members Directory in the 1974 Year Book, United Church of Christ, as well as to all Conference and Association offices. The contributor has had the option of designating his gift for the Congregational Christian Historical Society or the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society, or for any combination of these two organizations. To be a voting member of either Society the donor must contribute ten dollars. If he sends that amount or more undesignated, he automatically becomes a member of both Societies. It is too early to assess the result of the current appeal. Last year's appeal netted the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society a total of \$1,813.07. The previous year the figure was almost the same.

Since last year's annual meeting additions to the Hoy Memorial Fund totalled fifty dollars. The William Edwin Hoy and Mary Belle Ault Hoy Memorial, created by Dr. Gertrude B. Hoy, their daughter, in August 1971, now totals \$1,150.00, all given by Dr. Hoy. Dean George H. Bricker added seventy-five (\$75) to his two previous gifts in memory of his mother, Erma Rebuck Bricker. This memorial now amounts to two hundred and fifty dollars. On March 1, 1974, Mrs. Prentice contributed \$25.00 in memory of her husband, J. Stuart Prentice, Ph.D., who was the author of the History of the First United Church of Christ (First Reformed Church) in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, 1763-1963, 88 pages. Dr. Prentice also prepared and read a paper at the annual meeting of the Society in 1961, entitled, The Genesis of the Seminary. On February 28, 1974, Henry J. Young, Ph.D., a life member of the Society since 1956, donated fifty dollars in memory of Charles D. Spotts. Your Executive Secretary and Mrs. Anstaett, who is the secretary for the Society, purchased the current volume of the Publications of the Pennsylvania German Society in memory of Dr. Spotts.

The Librarian and the Executive Secretary agreed that the mailing and other details in the distribution of the microfilms of church records on a loan basis be handled by the office of the Executive Secretary. The reels are lent directly to the correspondent requesting them for a fee of one dollar per reel to cover, at least partially, the postage and handling costs. This past year sixteen reels circulated



a total of eighty-nine times. During the last three years the circulation total was three hundred and fifty-six. As has been the case during the past few years, genealogical inquiries are received in nearly every mail. These are handled by the Executive Secretary's office. The present policy is to refer the correspondent to a competent local genealogist if the inquiry requires extensive searching. Sometimes it can be answered, and is, by a quick reference to available data. Many times suggestions are made leading the inquirer to sources unknown to him.

REPORT OF THE LIBRARIAN, GEORGE H. BRICKER

During the past year about \$2,000 has been spent on new equipment for the archives and library. This was made possible by the grants which the Society received from the Arcadia Foundation. Three new book trucks were purchased, 252 lineal feet of shelving was installed in a storage room, 10 new vertical files were added to the Name and Place Files section of the archives. Several hundred acid-proof archive boxes were purchased to store records. A Technical processing section was established and equipped with desk, large-type typewriter and other equipment. Because of the volume of processing that is done by the Society, no longer could this be done by the staff of the Philip Schaff Library.

Since January 1, 1974, 264 items have been accessioned and cataloged. A selected list of these accessions will be published in the March issue of the NEWS.

The entire collection has been inventoried and rearranged on the shelves. Room was made on two ranges of shelving to receive the official minutes and publications of all the conferences and associations of the United Church of Christ. We are gratified by the number of these that we are receiving at the present time. Much of the older archival material is being recataloged, removed from the open shelving and placed in archival boxes in a records management group system. This will make it more available for researchers and free shelving for new material.

The sorting and preserving of material received from our churches and our official bodies continues to be one of the most important parts of our work. We have recently received 22 cartons of material dealing with youth work in the Evangelical and Reformed Church, 20 transfer files from the former Board of International Missions, 9 from the Board of World Ministries, 9 from the General Commission on Chaplains and Armed Forces Personnel, 31 transfer files of the official correspondence of Dr. Reginald Helfferich when he served as a staff officer of World Ministries.

It is difficult to separate my responsibilities as librarian of the Society from that as archivist of the United Church of Christ. Most of my work could be listed under the latter title for it deals with collecting and preserving material pertinent to the history of the United Church of Christ and answering inquiries of local churches now part of the UCC and of researchers dealing with that history.

ONLY A FEW MORE LEFT! GET 'EM WHILE THEY LAST!

That double anniversary in 1975--the 150th of Lancaster Theological Seminary and the 250th of the beginnings of the German Reformed Church on these shores--the minds of many thoughtful pastors and laymen will be turning to various historical resources.

By mid-summer 1974, it was learned, only about 660 copies remain of that 370-page volume, "A History of the Evangelical and Reformed Church" (Christian Education Press, 1961, edited by David Dunn.)



Chapters on the German Reformed Church, Reformed Church in the U.S., by William Toth, David Dunn, Josias Friedli; on the Evangelical Synod of North America including the European background, by Theophil Menzel and Paul N. Crusius; on the Evangelical and Reformed Church by Carl E. Schneider and James E. Wagner. A notable list of illustrations of significant persons and sites; statistical records, and a comprehensive bibliography.

Available at the original price of publication, \$5.95, from the following:

The Rev. Dr. Thomas D. Garner  
1505 Race Street  
Philadelphia, Pa. 19102

Eden-Heidelberg Bookstore  
1724 Chouteau Avenue  
St. Louis, Missouri 63103

#### HISTORICAL ITEMS FROM THE MIDWEST, LOWELL H. ZUCK

The second annual meeting of the newly organized Midwest Historians of the United Church of Christ convened on October 9, 1974 in Omaha, Nebraska, as part of the West Central regional meeting of the United Church. The President of the Midwest Historians, Dr. Charles Kennedy, and Ms. Ceres Henkel, Secretary, spoke on historical sources of empowerment within the United Church.

On November 9, 1974 nearly three hundred confirmands and their pastors attended a dozen workshops at Eden Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri. One of the sessions held in the Eden Archives considered the use of materials which preserve the history of the former Evangelical Synod, the former E and R Church, and the United Church of Christ. The workshop was part of Eden Seminary's yearlong 125th anniversary celebration.

Recent acquisitions of the Eden Archives include personal correspondence and papers of the late Dr. Louis W. Goebel, President of the Evangelical and Reformed Church from 1938 through 1953.

WE SOLICIT YOUR COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS. Please address them to:

Dr. Herbert B. Anstaett, Executive Secretary  
Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society  
555 West James Street  
Lancaster, Pa. 17603