

Shenandoah Mennonite Historian

Vol. 13, No. 2 Quarterly Publication of the Shenandoah Valley Mennonite Historians Spring 2006

MENNO ROUND TABLE –

GOING GREAT!

TWO THIS YEAR

THE FIRST ONE IS OVER!

“REMEMBERING THE MENNONITE HOUR”

As we entered the fellowship hall at Park View Mennonite Church on Saturday morning March 25, there was music in the air and it was the familiar songs we once sang or heard on the “MENNONITE HOUR” radio programs.

John Horst, the host for the meeting, had with him copies of all CD's which were made from original recordings of the various groups who sang on the Mennonite Hour.

John has been running a one-man show every Sunday morning on WEMC from 8:00-9:30, serving as disc jockey for the program “Mostly Mennonite, Mostly Acappella.”

(Continued on back cover)

THIS ISSUE

DIRECTORY OF AMISH, MENNONITE AND ANABAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE STATE OF VIRGINIA

Two years ago, in the summer issue of *SMH*, a directory was done for the first time. We soon discovered that we had missed a few and had to do an insert.

Our plans are to do this directory every two years. Membership changes occur, new churches are planted, and occasionally one is no longer operational. Thus we hope to keep you up-to-date on changes happening in the state.

NEW BOOK

“Of the making of books there is no end,” Solomon said. If that was true in his day, it certainly is true now. Too bad Solomon's library did not survive! We'll try to keep you informed of important new books out.

MENNO ROUND TABLE talk!

AMISH, ANABAPTISTS AND MENNONITES IN VIRGINIA

To answer the questions “How many Mennonites and Amish are there in Virginia and who are the different groups? one needs a directory. Here it is. We need to include the word “Anabaptists” for those who prefer to emphasize that heritage—one example being the Cornerstone churches, who, according to Gerald Martin, prefer being listed as Anabaptists rather than Mennonite. In actuality, each group listed would likely claim to be spiritual descendants of the Anabaptist movement of the sixteenth century.

The interchangeability of words has become interesting. Perhaps the greatest variation occurs among the Beachy Amish. Note the example of the “Set Free Mennonite Church” near Warm Springs Virginia, a small congregation that just came to our attention. Years ago it was known as the Set Free Foursquare Gospel Church. Pastor Mike Puffenberg, however became acquainted with a Beachy Amish friend and he became interested in Anabaptism as interpreted by the Beachy Amish. Four years ago the congregation made the necessary changes (plain dress, beards for men, etc.) to fellowship with the Beachy Amish. So they changed their name to “Set Free Mennonite Church!”

Membership numbers keep changing, so we include the latest information available on how many members found in each congregation and each group. The numbers in the brackets indicate membership according to the latest sources available.

To put such a list together requires information from three major directories and obtaining information from a number of individuals. Here are the sources:

Anabaptist (Mennonite) Directory. Harrisonburg: Sword and Trumpet, 2006

Mennonite Church Directory. Harrisonburg: Christian Light Publications, 2006

Sent Across the Street, Virginia Mennonite Conference, 2004-05, Harrisonburg, 2005

Interviews: Steve Brown, Joshua Eicher, Harold Huber, David King, Robert E. Knically, Gerald Martin, Lewis Martin, Ray Miller, John Peachey, Mike Puffenberg, Norwood F. Shank and Earl Zimmerman.



Virginia Mennonite Conference

Reports & Statistics
2004-2005

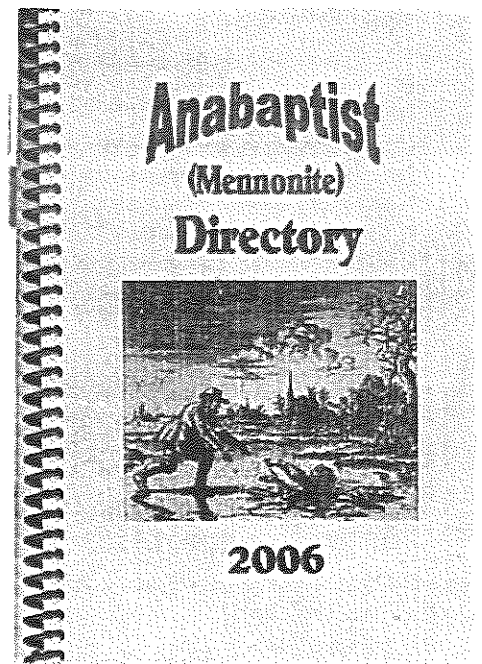
Virginia Commonwealth University
Richmond, Virginia

Mennonite Church Directory

2006



Compiled by Christian Light Publications



BEACHY AMISH CHURCHES

[561 members in 11 churches in VA; 148 churches elsewhere]

Faith Christian Fellowship, Catlett, VA	[56]
Faith Mission Fellowship, Free Union	[94]
Farmville Christian Fellowship, Farmville	[40]
Gospel Light Mennonite Church, Charlottesville	[24]
Kempsville Amish Mennonite Virginia Beach	[69]
Light of Hope Christian Fellowship Wytheville	[55]
Mount Zion Amish Mennonite Stuarts Draft	[22]
Oak Grove Church, Aroda	[101]
Pilgrim Christian Fellowship Stuarts Draft	[67]
Maranatha Bible Fellowship, Rose Hill	[13]
Set Free Mennonite Church, Warm Springs	[20]

BIBLICAL MENNONITE ALLIANCE

[177 members in four churches in VA; Elsewhere in other states and Canada there are 35 more churches in this Alliance]

Believers Fellowship, Waynesboro	[11]
Blue Ridge Christian Fellowship, Burnt Tree Grange, Radiant	[17]
Calvary Mennonite Fellowship Mt. Clinton	[117]
Oak Hill Mennonite, Cumberland	[32]

CENTRAL DISTRICT CONFERENCE OF THE MENNONITE CHURCH - USA

[One VA congregation; membership 50; this is the only VA congregation in that midwestern Conference of MC-USA

Shalom Mennonite	[50]
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CHARITY MINISTRIES [23]

One church in VA; This group has 40 churches in 17 other states and Canada

Dayspring Christian Fellowship, Amherst	[23]
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CONSERVATIVE MENNONITE

CONFERENCE [116 members in three churches in Virginia; 110 other congregations are scattered widely in 24 states, Canada and Mexico]

Dayspring Mennonite, Midland	[42]
Providence Mennonite, Virginia Beach	[34]
Trinity Mennonite, Prospect	[40]

CORNERSTONE CHURCH AND MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

[938 in three churches in VA; four other non-Virginia churches are listed in the *Directory*]

Cornerstone Church of Albemarle, Crozet	[38]
Cornerstone Church of Augusta, Staunton	[225]
Cornerstone Church of Rockingham, Harrisonburg	[675]

MOUNTAIN VALLEY MENNONITE CHURCHES

[363 members in VA; there is one additional congregation at Salem WV]

Bethel Mennonite, Broadway	[57]
Dayton Mennonite, Dayton	[188]
Faith Mennonite, South Boston	[27]
Morning View Mennonite, Singers Glen	[91]

MT. PLEASANT (Weaverland Conference)
[144 members in VA. This group often calls themselves Old Order Mennonite, but they drive cars. They use the same hymnbook (in larger format) as the Old Order Mennonites.

Mt. Pleasant, Dayton [144]

NATIONWIDE FELLOWSHIP CHURCHES [158 in two VA churches]

The *Directory* lists 102 other congregations in Bolivia, Canada, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Mexico, Nigeria, Paraguay, Philippines, and the United States

Pilgrim Mennonite, Amelia [105]
Pleasant Valley Mennonite Fellowship
Harrisonburg [45]

OLD ORDER AMISH CHURCHES

[Estimated 125 members in two Virginia locations]

Charlotte Court House (Charlotte Co.) [50]
Pearisburg (Giles County) [75]

OLD ORDER MENNONITES

[791]

This group began in 1900-01 in the Middle District of Virginia Mennonite Conference when some did not wish to go along with the majority group in certain worship and church life activities such as Sunday schools and revival meetings.

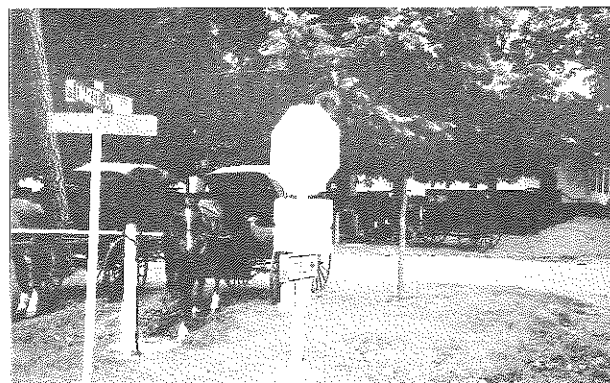
There are now two groups, since in the 1950's a separation occurred among the local Old Order Mennonites. People in both groups use horses and buggies for transportation. The two groups

are much alike in worship patterns, daily living and outlook on life.

Both groups alternate worship services in the historic Pleasant View meetinghouse and the Oak Grove buildings near Dayton. Both hold funerals and bury in the cemetery at Pleasant View.

The Cline-Showalter-Wenger group (sometimes simply known as the Showalter group, after a former bishop) has 470 members, according to minister Lewis Martin. They purchase electricity from the utility company. This group has three "permanent" worship locations at Pleasant View, Oak Grove and Riverdale (which also have small cemeteries) and they have an outreach service twice a month at the Spring Hill school.

The other group, known as the Wenger group, has 321 members, according to deacon Robert E. Knicely. Both groups have up-to-date farming and dairy equipment. For electricity the Wenger group purchases generators and diesel motors and produce their own electricity. Their "permanent" worship locations are Pleasant View, Oak Grove (as they alternate with the other group) and twice a month this group has an outreach service at the Ridge View School.



Pleasant View Old Order Mennonite Church, Dayton, VA. This photo, the one on the front cover, and those on the next page were taken by the editor on June 13, 2004 at the funeral of Amy Martin Knicely.



OLD ORDER MENNONITE (continued)

In search of farms the Wenger group tends to drift northward toward Singers Glen. One family has a major farm on the west end of Edom. At this point that family has a considerable distance by horse and buggy to get to a worship service.

For identification the groups are often named after the bishop. Currently, both groups have Wenger bishops who are first cousins.

Many from both groups subscribe to the *Botschaft* from Sugarcreek, Ohio, an English newspaper published for more conservative groups such as horse and buggy groups, and authorized by the Old Order Amish. Sugarcreek, Ohio is also the home of the well-known "Budget."

SOUTHEASTERN MENNONITE CONFERENCE [586]

This group has three additional churches in West Virginia and two in Puerto Rico.

Bank Mennonite, Hinton	[119]
Bethany Mennonite, Briery Branch	[50]
Bethesda Mennonite, Broadway	[32]
Ebenezer Mennonite, South Boston	[58]
McDowell Mennonite, McDowell	[18]
McGaheysville Mennonite, McGaheysville	[31]
Mount Hermon Mennonite, Stanardsville	[40]
Peake Mennonite, Hinton	[85]
Pike Mennonite, Harrisonburg	[78]
Rawley Springs Mennonite, Rawley Springs	[47]
Strasburg Mennonite, Strasburg (formerly Front Royal)	[28]

UNAFFILIATED CONGREGATIONS [242]

Bethel Mennonite, Gladys	[96]
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Broad Street Mennonite, Harrisonburg	[17]
Island Creek Mennonite, Hillsville	[22]
Lucas Hollow, Stanley	[10]
Richmond Mennonite Fellowship	[20]
Timberville Mennonite, Timberville	[42]
Wills Ridge Mennonite, Floyd	[35]

VIRGINIA MENNONITE CONFERENCE, a member of Mennonite Church - USA

[The largest Mennonite group has 7,971 members in VA, in 45 congregations; VMC also has 21 churches in West Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Ohio and Washington, D. C. and five emerging congregations; that membership totals 700.]

Beldor Mennonite, Elkton	[23]
Big Spring Mennonite, Luray	[56]
Calvary Community Church, Hampton	[2500]
(Steve Brown, associate pastor, gave a tour on April 1, 2006, in which he said membership is probably 2500 plus. They have many activities going, a staff of 62, and an annual budget of three million. They must be the largest Mennonite church in the U. S. in terms of membership. They have a large number of husband-wife "Care Deacons" to relate to the membership. Steve currently serves as Assistant Moderator of Virginia Mennonite Conference.)	
Calvary Community, Chesapeake	[60]
Charlottesville Mennonite, Charlottesville	[59]
Christiansburg Mennonite Fellowship, Christiansburg	[50]
Community Mennonite, Harrisonburg	[227]
Crossroads Mennonite, Broadway	[32]
Family of Hope, Harrisonburg	[12]
First Mennonite, Richmond	[80]
Gospel Hill Mennonite, Harrisonburg	[97]
Grace Mennonite Fellowship, Lacey Spring	[111]
Greenmonte Mennonite, Stuarts Draft	[100]
Harrisonburg Mennonite, Harrisonburg	[735]
Hebron Mennonite, Fulks Run	[87]
Huntington Mennonite, Newport News	[119]
Immanuel Mennonite, Harrisonburg	[60]
Lindale Mennonite, Linville	[355]
Lynside Mennonite, Lyndhurst	[86]

Mount Clinton Mennonite, Mount Clinton	[125]
Mount Pleasant Mennonite, Chesapeake	[285]
Mount Vernon, Grottoes	[76]
Mountain View Mennonite, Lyndhurst	[159]
New Beginnings Church, Bridgewater	[110]
Northern Virginia Mennonite, Fairfax	[25]
Park View Mennonite, Harrisonburg	[405]
Powhatan Mennonite, Powhatan	[127]
Providence Mennonite, Newport News	[35]
Rehoboth Mennonite, Schuyler	[19]
Ridgeway Mennonite, Harrisonburg	[176]
Springdale Mennonite, Waynesboro	[200]
Staunton Mennonite, Staunton	[22]
Stephens City Mennonite, Stephens City	[73]
Stephens City is assisting a new Korean church which is just now beginning	
Stuarts Draft Mennonite, Stuarts Draft	[59]
Trissels Mennonite, Broadway	[109]
Valley View Mennonite, Criders	[70]
Vietnamese Christian Fellowship, Falls Church	[45]
Warwick River Mennonite, Newport News	[184]
Waynesboro Mennonite, Waynesboro	[153]
Weavers Mennonite, Harrisonburg	[305]
Williamsburg Mennonite, Williamsburg	[76]

Zion Hill Mennonite, Singers Glen	[52]
Zion Mennonite, Broadway	[228]

Five emerging congregations, mostly in Washington, D. C. metropolitan area--add four more members

IN SUMMARY:

Virginia Mennonite Conference (Virginia congregations only)	7,971
Beachy Amish	561
Biblical Mennonite Alliance	177
Central Dist. Conference – MC-USA	50
Charity Ministries	23
Conservative Mennonite Conference	116
Cornerstone Churches	938
Mountain Valley	363
Mt. Pleasant	144
Nationwide Fellowship	158
Old Order Amish	est. 125
Old Order Mennonite	791
Southeastern Mennonite Conference	586
Unaffiliated with any conference or Alliance	242
TOTAL IN VIRGINIA	12,245

BOOK CORNER

Harry S. Stout, *Upon the Altar of the Nation: A Moral History of the American Civil War*. New York: Viking, 2006. Of the writing of Civil War books there certainly is no end! (In fact, the editor of *SMH* hopes to have one out in a year.) Stout's 550-page book elaborates in great detail the "just war theory" which both sides in the Civil War claimed. Both sides were sure that God was on their side! And there were plenty of preachers and secular newspapers and magazines to make that claim many times.

Author Stout is sure that wars can be just. He calls West Point "the seminary of America's national religion." He does admit up front that war "is killing" and is "evil," but a "necessary evil" and therefore "right." He doesn't say which Civil War side is right. Both sides during the war declared days of "fasting and prayer"—the Confederacy calling for 10 such days and the North called for three, plus emphasized several thanksgiving days. The 45 chapters can get tedious in detail; the author was very thorough and often quotes preachers and newspapers proving the rightness of their cause. The author's final conclusion? Every war is a perversion of peace, but we must "demand a just war and a merciful outcome."

Obviously, people of conscience, such as Mennonites, find it impossible to imagine God on both sides, or that war is moral! Many Mennonites favored the North, but the Hildebrand Mennonite Church (this, of course, is not in Stout's book!) rather unusually observed a day of fasting and prayer at least four times at President Davis' request. One wonders how Bishop Hildebrand prayed. Deacon Jacob R. Hildebrand, in the publication, *A Mennonite Journal*, Burd Street Press, 1996, gives us his pro-Confederate perspective! The EMU library has a copy of Stout's book, as does the *SMH* editor.

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REMEMBERING THE "MENNONITE HOUR"

(continued from front cover)

John Horst focused on the significant role of music in this radio program from the early 1950s until 1977. For years Norman Derstine was the announcer and B. Charles Hostetter the speaker on this program that went out to many radio stations. He pointed out two "eras" of music—the first in the 50s and early 60s which was primarily hymns led by J. Mark Stauffer and Earl Maust, and the second era when more trained singers sang choir anthems led by David Seitz and Marvin Miller. The ensembles of ladies and men disbanded in 1968. Recorded music from 19 ten-inch records was often used on the programs.

For quite some time David Augsburg was the popular speaker. Through the years there were many responses of appreciation, first from Christians then from others such as prisoners who later signed up for Home Bible Studies.

At this March Round Table, 31 people were present, about half of whom had been involved with the radio program. Richard Weaver whose studio was long used, and Hubert Pellman, author of *Mennonite Broadcasts, First 25 Years*, gave their perspectives. Ken Weaver talked about how things worked behind the scenes. Lewis Strite was noted for his vision and involvement.

We closed by singing from memory several songs which were frequently used. What a memory! Cassettes and CDs are available at Mennonite Media and EMU Bookstore.

Grace Mumaw

LOOKING AHEAD . . .

Next Round Table Discussion

"REMEMBERING PARK VIEW, PART II

with Harold Lehman and Jim Rush at

Park View Mennonite Church on

September 23, 9-11 a.m.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

BRING MEMORIES AND PHOTOS



Photo: Courtesy of Edith Kurtz Himes, when she attended

Is your membership up-to-date?

\$6.00 individual / \$10 a couple

See Jim Rush rushj@emhs.net

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