



Shenandoah Mennonite Historian

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Elwood E. Yoder, Editor

A quarterly periodical dedicated to the history and culture of Mennonites in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, USA

Reflections from the Past to help us live in the Present

In this issue we feature two articles about racial integration in Rockingham County, Virginia. James Rush summarized a presentation he heard about African-Americans in the Broadway community, near Harrisonburg. Gary Smucker wrote about the early years of integration at the Ridgeway Mennonite Church in Harrisonburg.

For two years in the late 1980s, my family and I attended the Crossroads Mennonite Church, Timberville, Va., where I served as a seminary intern. My son Philip J. Yoder attended their final service on January 2, 2022, and he wrote a summary of what happened on their last Sunday of worship.

When Linden Showalter invited me to attend a 500th year evening of remembrance at Marion Mennonite Church, I was delighted to participate. Read my summary of an unusual evening inside this issue.

This spring and summer several events are taking place that you may want to attend. See the News section inside on page eleven for details. Lord willing, I may see some of you at those events.

Linville Creek Church of the Brethren, Broadway, Va.
(above) February 26, 2022.

Photo by Editor



Robert and Twila Risser attended an evening of remembrance at the Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg, Pa., on March 9, 2022. The Risser's joined over a hundred guests who ate a sausage meal on the 500th anniversary of a similar event in Zurich, Switzerland, which started the Swiss Reformation.

Photo by the Editor

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The Barrenness of a Cemetery: examining patterns of a fragmented community in Broadway, Va.

A presentation by Charity Derrow, February 20, 2022, at the Plains District Memorial Museum in Timberville, Va.

By James Rush

Charity Derrow's talk analyzed one section of the Linville Creek Church of the Brethren Cemetery in Broadway, Virginia. There are four existing stones marking African Americans' gravesites, but you can be sure there are many more unmarked graves in this one area. James Lewis, the last known African-American

would have been buried on the plantation before the Civil War.

The 1860 Rockingham County census tells who enslaved people and how many. The 1870 census gives freed African-American names. The few African-American families in Broadway were settled along Central Street - across the street on the west and north side of the current post office. The 1885 Atlas shows where these African-Americans lived. In 1875 there was a Broadway African-American United Brethren Church. In 1882 there was a one-room colored schoolhouse built. The Allen family was one of the leading African-American families in Broadway.

From 1870 – 1920, African-Americans moved out. James Lewis worked in the Rhodes Funeral Home as a driver to their hearse – he also worked in the post office. He died in 1925. After the Civil War, African American persons worked more like paid servants in home care.

In 1870 there were 160 African-Americans listed in Plains District of Rockingham County. In 1880 there were sixty-two African-American residents



Tombstone for Jacob A. (1850-1909) and Docia (1860-1924) Allen, in the Linville Creek Church of the Brethren cemetery, Broadway, Va.

Photo by the Editor, February 26, 2022

buried there, died in 1925. In an earlier talk at the Tunker house in Broadway, M. R. Ziegler thought forty African-Americans might be buried in the Linville Creek Church cemetery. These are most likely burials after the Civil War because enslaved African-Americans

in Plains with thirty-two in Broadway. In 1900 there were seventeen African-Americans within four households in Broadway. In 1910 there were three African-Americans in Broadway. And in 1920, only one – that was James Lewis. Why did African-Americans move away? Small towns had very few jobs for African-

Americans. Rockingham County school board would only pay for a teacher if the school had twenty pupils or more – and there would not have been twenty African-American pupils in Broadway. There was also the rise of Jim Crow laws and the KKK in the South.

In 1972 M. R. Ziegler said that African-Americans sat in the back row at Linville Creek Church of the Brethren and had separate communions back earlier.

Crossroads Mennonite Church Final Service

By Philip J. Yoder

On the first Sunday of the new year, January 2, 2022, Crossroads Mennonite Church, Timberville, Va., held its final service. The leadership, from lead pastor to conference ministers to lay leaders, discerned together that it was time to give thanks for the ministry God had given them, to close the church and to move forward. District Minister Mike Shenk gave a few remarks about the church's history. Clyde Kratz, Executive Conference Minister, shared a few pastoral thoughts.

Lead Pastor Marian Buckwalter led the congregation in sharing communion, a last supper, as it were, and gave a meditation on Matthew 5:14-16 & John 1.

The overall theme in the closing worship was Christ, who is the light of the world. That even though the ministry of this church family has come to an end, it doesn't mean we have to stop shining our light. Rather, the congregation was sent out asking, how might God give new direction to each one? How might we bear witness to Jesus' spirit in the days ahead? In fact, a church group from the area uses the building for Wednesday night prayer meetings. Perhaps God isn't finished with the Crossroads meeting house after all. But even if God is done with Crossroads, what a privilege it was, to see Christ at work in this place! Thanks be to God.



Crossroads Mennonite Church, Timberville, Va., began as a Virginia Mennonite Conference congregation in 1934. The congregation (above) closed and held its final worship service January 2, 2022. Photo taken by Philip J. Yoder on January 2, 2022

A Sausage Eating Event to Remember

By Elwood E. Yoder

Linden Showalter had dreamed of remembering the 500th anniversary of the Swiss Reformation in his Waynesboro, Pa. kitchen with a few friends. Linden had pinned March 9, 2022, on his calendar. But when word got out about his vision for gathering on the quincenary of a rebellious sausage-eating event in Zurich, Switzerland, people asked to attend. He moved to the fellowship hall of his home church, Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg, Pa., and over one hundred guests enjoyed Berner sausage with fixings.

Showalter described the evening as a time to remember, not celebrate. In the sanctuary of the Marion Mennonite Church, Showalter gave a lecture on the details of the Zurich sausage rebellion from March 9, 1522. Surrounded by cornfields in rural Franklin County, Pa., historians, friends, and Anabaptist descendants eagerly listened to Showalter's account of the



Guests enjoyed a sausage meal at the Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg, Pa., March 9, 2022.

Photo by Editor

unfolding saga of the Swiss Reformation, which led to the Anabaptist movement three years later.

The evening began with a tour of the Historical Center of the Cumberland Valley, located near the Marion Mennonite Church. Then folks from Marion served a delicious meal with a great sausage sandwich including sauerkraut, mushrooms, and various mustards.

Eating sausage with folks who had driven from states all over the east coast to attend was a highlight of the evening. The guests came from many Anabaptist groups, including Old Order Mennonite and Mennonite Church USA.

When the writer talked to widely-known author and tour guide leader John Ruth, from Franconia, Pa., he gave instructions to spell his last name correctly and not confuse him with Dr. John Roth, who also attended. The writer drove to Dulles airport to pick up Dr. Roth, who had only several days earlier participated at a similar event in Zurich, Switzerland. Roth wanted to attend both



Dr. John Roth (left), Linden Showalter, and John Ruth joined guests on the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Swiss Reformation, an event held at the Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg, Pa., March 9, 2022.

Photo by Editor

gatherings. Linden Showalter developed his “time to remember” in Chambersburg independently and without knowing that a similar event would occur in Zurich.

After Linden Showalter’s excellent historical call to remember the sausage rebellion from 1522, John Ruth, Amos Hoover, and John Roth brought greetings to the group. Amos Hoover came from the Old Order Mennonite historical center in Ephrata, Pa., the Muddy Creek Farm Library. Dr. John Roth, a history professor at Goshen College, reminded the group that Anabaptist history five hundred years hence is moving toward reconciliation between Reformed, Lutheran, and Menno-



Joyce and Gerald Lehman joined guests at the Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg, Pa., March 9, 2022. Photo by the Editor

nite. A Swiss Catholic bishop gave a blessing to Roth and other Mennonites in attendance at the Zurich event. It was a hopeful conclusion to an evening organized to remember a remarkable event five hundred earlier that led to the Anabaptist Reformation.

Somewhere in the Swiss Alps in the sixteenth century, near Zurich, lived Fredli Joder (later Yoder) and his family, this writer’s seventeenth-generation ancestor, who joined the Anabaptist movement. When Showalter’s



Marilyn Oosterman, Doris Sollenberger (standing), RuthE Showalter, and Linden Showalter, in the Marion Mennonite Church, March 9, 2022.

Photo by Editor.

invitation to attend the evening came, it did not take long to ask for a place at the table in the church fellowship hall. This writer received greetings from many friends during a spiritually moving and historically profound evening. Along with the sausage dinner, sixteenth-century Christopher Froschauer books lay on display for guests to examine. Froschauer Bibles, printed in Zurich, crossed the Atlantic Ocean with many Mennonite and Amish immigrant families, including the Yoders. It seems to this writer that the quincentenary time of remembrance of the origins of Anabaptism began with an idea in Linden Showalter’s kitchen that morphed into a fabulous meal with Anabaptist friends galore.



John Roth (left), Edsel Burdge, and Elwood Yoder, March 9, 2022. Photo by Leah Laughlin

Integrating Ridgeway Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

By Gary Smucker

When Dan and Frances Smucker came to the Red Hill community on the east side of Harrisonburg, Virginia in 1946 to help establish the church that became Ridgeway Mennonite Church, they found a community with black and white people living as neighbors. The house in the lot next to the church, when it was built, was owned by a black family, and Hawkins Street on Red Hill took the name from that family. The store across the street had been owned by Dixie Williams, an African-American man. The porch of Dixie Williams' store was the place where Moses Slabaugh had the church services on Red Hill in the beginning. Williams walked around during the service and corrected any misbehavior among the children during the services.

In a 1978 interview, James Curry talked about living on Red Hill and black and white families living together and sharing in the 1930s and '40s: *"We had these things, and if we had milk, we gave the milk and maybe some of the people that were living down in here then, they traded the eggs. They were just good, really kind people, very poor, and everybody sort of needed everybody. If we were eating and someone came and they wanted to eat, they ate."*

"I remember very distinctly when I started school, Effinger Street School, and we had to walk down. Somehow, we were told which school to go to, and we walked to Franklin Street as you go up Reservoir Street. That was the dividing line. Your (white) friends went up that way, and you went on down to Effinger Street School (the school for black children) and they turned left there and went down to the Main Street school together."



James "Billy" Curry at Broad Street Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va., unknown date.

Photo from Billy Curry folder at Menno Simons Historical Library, Harrisonburg, Va.

Mrs. Curry asked her husband in the interview: *"Did it make a difference with your friends when they went to the white school and you went downtown?"* Curry answered: *"Somehow, now that you say it, somehow that was something that we just didn't talk about. We*

were all anxious to get home. We used to meet up coming home. Sometimes they'd be coming and we'd be coming. We'd come on down (to Red Hill) together and change into our old clothes, and what times we had after we'd done our chores, what times we had to play; we would all flock together and play. In fact, it's the fellow that is right across over here that I grew up with, and who I played with, and he's still up here." The interview in 1978 was made on Red Hill in the home of the son of the Currys who lived there at the time.

The Mennonite students from EMC (Eastern Mennonite College now University) had worship services call 'Cottage Meetings' starting in the 1930s in the homes of people who invited them in. Billy Curry talks about the meetings which both black and white neighbors attended in his great-grandmother's home on Red Hill: *"My great-grandmother that lived across (Reservoir Street), Nanie Curry, she opened her home. The Mennonites, when they first came in the area, they were mainly trying to get acquainted, and trying to have a little Sunday School or a little prayer in the homes. She opened her home, her lovely parlor that no one ever got into unless it was for special company or some*

special reason, and they began to have Sunday School, and we went. And when the Mennonites came, a lot of white people from the neighborhood came to my grandmother's too, and we worshipped together, exchanged ideas and thoughts, and they butchered together, and ate apple butter together, and cut wood together, and everything."

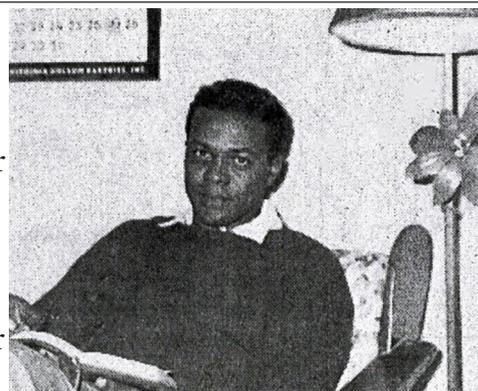
Speaking about the meetings Curry said: *"And I was always impressed because when they had Sunday school everything was like flannel graph or in picture form; something that was tangible, something that you could touch and you could see, and it really meant so much. They could say, like reading out of the Bible, who was whose son. That was impressive, but that wasn't something that you could see. When they put up the flannel board and they'd say, 'Well, this is Moses' son,' and like that, the flannel graph worked out the story, and it was just wonderful. (Mennonites) had a way of really being kind, and I spent quite a lot of time in some of the homes. When I could see Christian living going on daily, this was the same as getting up and washing your face and drinking water."*¹

Members of the Red Hill community got along well and would have attended church together, but the Virginia Mennonite Mission Board decided there should be separate worship places for blacks and whites. The 1941 decision by the Virginia Mennonite Conference to have 'separate but equal' worship divided a community which was already integrated in many ways. Jim Crow laws were in effect in Virginia at that time and the leaders did not want to rock the boat.

Black residents of Red Hill were 'invited'

1. Curry, James and Peggy Curry, "African Americans in Harrisonburg," Transcript 1, August 8, 1978: Harrisonburg, Virginia, Interviewer: Inez Ramsey, Carrier Library Special Collections, James Madison University (edited slightly for clarity), p. 3.
2. Smucker, Dan and Frances Archive Collection, Virginia Mennonite Conference Archives, Eastern Mennonite University, Box 7.
3. Donald B. Kraybill, *Eastern Mennonite University: a Century of Countercultural Education* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2017), 174.

to attend the Gay Street Mission, which was for blacks and in a different part of town. Dan Smucker said in an interview, he



James A. Curry, 1961.

felt that all residents of Red Hill should have been invited to attend the church, but he also felt intimidated as a young, inexperienced pastor who was just beginning his ministry and finding his way in his work. Dan said, *"It didn't feel right. The neighbors walked by the church and I wasn't supposed to invite them to come to church."*²

The Gay Street Mission (later Broad Street Mennonite Church) was the church in Harrisonburg designated by the Virginia Mennonite Mission Board as the place for African Americans to worship in Harrisonburg. Having a separate church was a way to tread softly around the Jim Crow laws in effect in Virginia at that time. The Mission Board declared that Mennonite rituals of communion and foot washing would be separated along racial lines. Fannie Swartzentruber and her husband Ernest were in charge of the Mission. Recently there have been a number of stories about Fannie's reaction to the segregated communion. "For Fannie, the communion service in the fall of 1944 was a charade. It upset her so much that she bolted out of the service with a young daughter in tow and walked the four miles home."³ The Swartzentrubers were quickly removed from their positions, but Fannie's ac-



The Gospel for Minority Groups too

Daniel W. Lehman was the editor of *Missionary Light* from 1942-1946, the news magazine of the Virginia Mennonite Mission Board. He was a strong advocate for equality. During his time as editor there were many messages like the one above in the magazine about the Church being for all races and ethnic groups. Langston Hughes' poem 'Negro' was printed, as Lehman wrote, to have the readers think about injustices in the lives of African-Americans.

Graphic and poem, *Missionary Light*, Apr/May 1946, p 5, p 8

tion made the black members who had joined the church press even stronger for changes and equality in the church.

Daniel W. Lehman was a Mennonite bishop for the Harrisonburg churches who was an advocate for racial equality and equal treatment

Auxiliary) met in the homes of black and white members as well as in both church buildings. The daytime meetings of the WMSA included a potluck meal and work on projects like sewing blankets for relief and making gift bundles to send to refugees. Roberta Webb was one of the leaders of the Broad Street Church, and the women's group met in her house occasionally.⁴

In July of 1955 the Virginia Mennonite Conference repented from the former position of separating the races in the church. "The main points of the new policy served as an apology for the previous policy. First of all, they repented from their spiritual immaturity and asked God to remove any 'present un-Christianlike attitudes'; and, secondly, they extended the right hand of fellowship and desired more perfect relationships in demonstration of Acts 10:34-35.⁵ Although the first policy (the 1941 resolution of separation) wasn't necessarily being enforced by Broad Street Church, nevertheless the Conference saw fit to adopt a conciliatory policy more in line with the New Testament."⁶

for black and white church members. Lehman was the bishop who encouraged a number of moves for members of all races to work together. He encouraged Dan and Frances Smucker to cooperate with Broad Street Church and work together with the African-American church members.

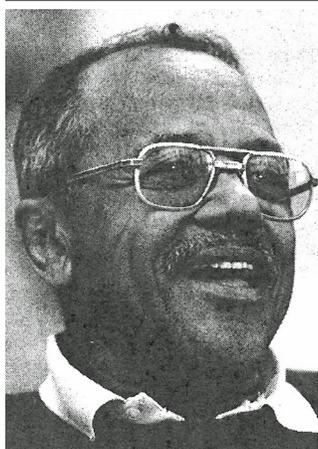
By 1955, long before the schools in Harrisonburg were integrated, the women's groups of the two churches were working together. The WMSA (Women's Missionary and Service

On Red Hill, neighbors of Ridgeway Church named Johnson who were black started attending the Sunday school, the Summer Bible School, and the MYF (Mennonite Youth Fellowship). They were friends of the Sites boys who attended church. Their participation happened without controversy, and Dan and Frances Smucker and others welcomed them to the church. African students who attended EMC came with other students from the college and participated in the activities of the congregation.

4. Smucker, Dan and Frances Archive Collection, Virginia Mennonite Conference Archive, Eastern Mennonite University, Box 5.

5. *Minutes of the Virginia Mennonite Conference: Including Historical Introduction, Statistical Section with Data on Conference Members and Her Official Statement of Christian Fundamentals: Volume II (Proceedings from 1951-1966)* (Harrisonburg, Va.: Virginia Mennonite Conference, 1967), 35.

6. Weber, John, "The History of Broad Street Mennonite Church, 1936-1971," Menno Simons Historical Library, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Virginia, February 15, 1971, p. 26.



James A. "Bill" Curry, 1995. From "Role Model: At Spotswood Bill Curry did it all," an article in the *Daily News Record* about Curry's retirement.

The deacons in the Mennonite churches help with communion among other duties. James A. Curry was ordained as a deacon at Broad Street Mennonite Church, October 8, 1961, as the first African American ordained in the Virginia Mennonite Conference. Bishop Daniel Lehman officiated at the ordination. Curry was chosen by lot, and he was ordained to serve 'the three Men-

nonite Churches of the Harrisonburg District' which were Chicago Avenue and Ridgeway Churches in addition to Broad Street.⁷

James Curry, who usually went by his nickname 'Billy,' grew up in the Red Hill neighborhood where Ridgeway Mennonite Church is located. By the time he was ordained a deacon, Curry and his wife Peggy Harris Curry lived near the Broad Street Mennonite Church. Curry said in a 1978 interview about Broad Street Church: *"That's where the excitement was. The songs they'd sing; they'd go ahead and teach you a song that you'd keep in your mind all week long. So, then I realized when I was old enough to choose for myself that this was the way of life for me, and it's really been wonderful."*⁸

Dan Smucker asked Curry, the recently ordained deacon at Broad Street Church who was an African American, to help serve com-

munion at Ridgeway Church. That Curry would serve as deacon and wash feet and take the bread and cup with the Ridgeway members, sent a strong message of unity especially after the earlier message of separation of the races in communion services.

Frances and Dan Smucker believed and taught the Great Commission: Make disciples of all nations. In the New Testament one of the first converts to Christianity was an African from Ethiopia (Acts 8: 26-39); so, certainly, African Americans were our sisters and brothers and equal to everyone else in the Church. By the time of the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s in America, Ridgeway Mennonite Church had been integrated with black and white people attending church and worshiping together. This position was in line with the peace and justice teachings of the Mennonite Church. It was done—without fanfare—following the commands in the Bible to love one's neighbor.

It is a blessing to know that a church conference as well as individuals can repent of past mistakes and "extend the right hand of fellowship."⁹ The embrace in 1955 of a more just and loving stance in race relations by the conference did not end the search for justice in the church or solve all the problems of discrimination in the Virginia Mennonite Conference, of course, but the willingness to confess and repent the wrongs of the past was a big step in the right direction. It was a move to follow the second commandment: "Love your neighbor as yourself." (Mathew 22:39)

7. Ibid., 30.

8. Curry, James and Peggy Curry, "African Americans in Harrisonburg," Transcript 1, August 8, 1978; Harrisonburg, Virginia, Interviewer: Inez Ramsey, Carrier Library Special Collections, James Madison University (edited slightly for clarity), p. 3.

9. Weber, John, "The History of Broad Street Mennonite Church, 1936-1971", Menno Simons Historical Library, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Virginia, February 15, 1971, p. 26.

Life for Christ in the Mountains

By Elwood E. Yoder

During the 1920s, Fannie Kurtz gave a witness for Christ in the Whitmer region of West Virginia, near the Job mission center. Originally from Ohio, Fannie had worked as a matron at Eastern Mennonite School from 1919-1921, but then she sought missionary work in the Whitmer area of Randolph County, W.Va., from 1921-1924.

Fannie was a writer and explained her work through letters she wrote to the Home Mission Board of Virginia Conference. In a surprising essay in the 1924 *Mennonite Yearbook & Directory*, nestled in the middle of reports from church and mission leaders, all men, Fannie wrote about the challenges of proclaiming Christ in her West Virginia valley. The children were the ones she and the other “missionary sisters” worked to teach the ways of the gospel message. Forty-four, and a single woman in 1924, Fannie wrote of the old customs, evil practices, ignorance, and generational patterns she witnessed. However, some in the Job and Whitmer region responded to Christ, and the small Mennonite churches slowly grew in the 1920s. Fannie Kurtz Horst (1880-1962) moved to her home state of Ohio in 1924, got married, and is buried in the Martins Mennonite Church cemetery, Orville, Ohio.

In Harry A. Brunk’s second volume history book about the Virginia Mennonite Conference he names thirty-nine “missionary sisters.” Generally single, the women moved to the Job mission house or across the Allegheny Mountain to the Roaring Creek mission house. These women gave several years or up to a decade as a witness for Christ. Many of them

were teachers, but others helped the missionary families and supported the programs of the West Virginia mission churches. Most of these women served in the 1920s and 1930s. They made great personal sacrifices, as their minimal allowances required them to garden, sew their own clothes, and find other ways to make money.

Nellie Coffman (1898-1986) taught school and bolstered the church’s outreach programs at the Roaring Creek Mennonite Church in Onego, W.Va. Nellie, from the Bank Mennonite Church in Rockingham County, Va., taught for several years in the public schools of Pendleton County, W.Va., serving 1926-1933. Nellie graduated from Eastern Mennonite School, attended the State Normal School (now James Madison University), and received a Teacher’s Certificate.¹

Nellie and other missionary sisters tirelessly visited in mountain homes, walked miles on mountain trails, crossed streams on foot logs, and where there were none, took off their shoes and waded through. Nellie and others often went out from the mission home for several days, eating meals and spending nights in the homes of mountain families who warmly welcomed them.² After Nellie Coffman saw Summer Bible Schools operate in the Brethren Church, she asked her Mennonite bishop if they could



Photograph of Nellie Frances Coffman taken by Bob Blair on July 24, 1979, in her home on the family farm on Dry River in Rockingham County, Virginia.

1. Patricia Heatwole Hertzler, *The Story of Melvin Jasper Heatwole and Mollie Grace Coffman*, Powhatan, Va., 1983, 232.

2. Elaine Sommers Rich, *Mennonite Women*, Herald Press, 1983, 163.

be started in W.Va., and the answer was affirmative. Soon other Mennonite Churches in the Virginia Conference started Bible Schools. When *Missionary Light* began in 1941, Nellie Coffman served for seven years as Assistant Editor of the Virginia Conference mission's newsletter.



The two photos above show the Roaring Creek Mennonite Church building, March 3, 2022, Pendleton County, W.Va. It appears that the building has not been used for regular worship for decades, perhaps fifty years. This building was moved here from another location about seven miles away in 1913. The benches are probably those that were installed in 1913. Roaring Creek was a part of Virginia Mennonite Conference until 1972. The 1902 *Church and Sunday School Hymnal* books on the benches, found when the Editor stopped by for a visit in March 2022, are stamped on the inside "Pike Mennonite Church, Rockingham County, Va." Photos by Editor, March 3, 2022

In the News

Jo Anne Kraus spoke to sixty-two in-person and Zoom attendees at the Mt. Clinton Mennonite Church on March 29, 2022. Kraus discussed her recent book, *Holy Experiment*, a history of the Warwick River Mennonite Colony. In the meeting, Jim Hershberger and Norman Wenger were re-elected to serve as Historian officers for two-year terms. Chairman Jim Hershberger announced that Dr. John Roth will speak at the Historian's annual meeting Nov. 12, 2022.

The Trissels Mennonite Church bicentennial celebration begins May 1, 2022, with a morning sermon (10:30 a.m.) at Trissels from Elwood Yoder, who is completing a history book about Trissels. On May 1, at Trissels, at 6:30 p.m., Andrea Early will lead a Singing School Reenactment, followed by a Harmonia Sacra singing at 7:00 p.m. All are invited.

An exhibit will open May 22, 2022, at the Brethren & Mennonite Heritage Center, Harrisonburg, Va., titled "A Mixed Legacy: The Brethren & Mennonite Record of Racial Separation and Connection."

Evan Knappenberger and Elwood Yoder will deliver a public lecture on June 9, 2022, at 6:30 p.m., about L. J. Heatwole. Knappenberger and Yoder will speak in Detwiler Auditorium at Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community, Harrisonburg, Va. Their lecture title is "Bishop Lewis J. Heatwole: Influential Churchman, Scientist, and Educator in Rockingham County, Virginia." The public is invited, and there is no charge to attend. A time of questions and responses will follow the lecture.



Linville Creek Church of the Brethren, February 26, 2022. Tombstone for James G. Allen, an African-American man from Broadway, Va. (1830-1914). Photo by the Editor

The *Shenandoah Mennonite Historian* is published quarterly by the Shenandoah Valley Mennonite Historians, established in 1993.

Officers of the Historians: Chair, James L. Hershberger; Treasurer, Norman Wenger; Secretary, James Rush; Lois Bowman Kreider; Gerald R. Brunk; and, Elwood E. Yoder, Editor

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If you have an idea for an article or picture for the *Historian*, contact the Editor at elyoder@gmail.com.

All past issues of *Shenandoah Mennonite Historian*, from 1994-2020, can be found at mennonitearchivesofvirginia.net. This site includes a link to over 1,600 photos related to Mennonites in Virginia, provides a way to subscribe to *Historian* online, and connects readers to the Editor's history blog.

An annual individual membership fee for the Shenandoah Valley Mennonite Historians is \$10.00 per year, which includes a subscription to the *Historian*. Additional family memberships are \$5 each. Send membership fees to James Rush, e-mail at jameslrush@comcast.net, phone 540-434-0792, or U.S. mail to James Rush, 780 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, Virginia, 22802.