



HERITAGE HORIZONS

a publication of

NORTH AMERICAN BAPTIST HERITAGE COMMISSION

*...a memorial book was written in His presence, recording those who revered Him
and those who had the highest respect for His Name...Malachi 3:16*

An Auxiliary
of the North
American Baptist
Conference

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PLEASE NOTE: Members are asked to check the date on their address label to learn when your yearly membership fees are due. The first number is the month and the second number is the year. Example: 11/97 means in November 1997 your fees are due.

Hitherto Has the Lord Helped Us!!

George W. Lang

As a young boy entering the fifth grade, I moved from Tacoma, Washington to Detroit, Michigan where my father was called to serve as the pastor of the Ebenezer Baptist Church.

To my boyhood mind, it was a strange name to call a church - Ebenezer. Until then the word Ebenezer had only been associated with that Christmas grinch - Scrooge ...an association far removed from what I would think a church would want to claim.

Then I gradually became acquainted with the Biblical background of that name. In a hymn I occasionally sang, the phrase would appear: "Here I'll raise my Ebenezer, Hither by Thy Help I've come."



Also I learned about the Old Testament account described in 1 Samuel 7:12: "Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer saying 'Hitherto has the Lord helped us'."

So that was it!! Ebenezer was a memorial that Samuel had put up to remind the Israelites that God had blessed them with a great military victory. In fact this victory was the turning point during the history of the Judges in which Israel no longer lived as the victims of the Philistines, but as their conquerors. 1 Samuel 7:13 indicates that the Philistines were subdued to the extent that they did not invade Israel territory again.

As I thought about this recently, my mind was curious - what did this name mean in the minds and hearts of the members of this church in Detroit?

Looking at some of their anniversary booklets, it became obvious that it meant a great deal.

The Fortieth Anniversary booklet recounts the beginnings when sixty-six charter members met together with others to hold their first service on Sunday morning, November 20, 1889, in a rented hall. The brochure continues to describe how their first building was built and dedicated free of debt in the last Sunday of February 1899. This was made possible by the sacrificial giving of the members, the church refraining

"from seeking outside financial aid." By 1907 when they completed the building of another, larger church facility in a nearby location, their membership already had grown to 224. No wonder at the time of their 40th anniversary with a membership now of almost 500 members, the inside cover bore the caption: "Ebenezer - Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

In 1988 fifty years later, for the 90th Anniversary, the Associate Pastor of Youth attests: "Through two World Wars, two Asian wars, sixteen United States Presidents, a great depression, city riots and numerous trials and tribulations, Ebenezer Baptist Church has stood tall proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ. What a Heritage!" Similar to the caption on the cover of the 90th: "Here I'll Raise my Ebenezer, Hither By Thy Help I've Come," the church now of 650 members was rightfully celebrating its participation in the support of 48 missionaries.

Ebenezer - a stone of remembrance - set up by Samuel to remind the people of how graciously and powerfully the Lord had helped. That is what the NAB Heritage Commission is all about: making the effort to collect - to organize - to make available - records of the many ways the Lord has been faithful in His support of our parents, our leaders, our churches and our denomination. In such reflection we are re-inspired and as we share with our children, they too are inspired - and guided as well.

We really appreciate your involvement with us in this effort as a member of our Commission. We encourage you to invite others to join with us in this important ministry!

Please Note:

*If you find a * after your name on the address sticker attached to the envelope. Your membership fee is due.*

bww



Is it time to renew
your subscription?

HERITAGE COMMISSION CHANGES:

Dr. George A. Dunger began a two year Sabbatical in July during which he will be writing the history of the North American Baptist Seminary.

Rev. George W. Lang has begun his work as the first director of the Heritage Commission the first of July. (See his editorial in this issue of the Heritage Horizons.)

Berneice Westerman has been given the title of Associate Archivist.

Andreas Stein, an NAB student from Hannover, Germany is working 4 afternoons each week to help us. He is sorting and arranging rare and historical books many written in German. Andreas has had previous experience in archival work in Germany. He tells us that some of our books would be under lock and key in Germany. They lost many books, during the war years, due to the bombings.

We welcome William Gingrich Associate director of finance and business at Oakbrook Terrace, as our new Advisor and want to thank Ron Salzman for helping us in forming our new Constitution as well as in all the perceptive advice he gave us.

Our Heritage Breakfast at the Triennial Conference in Edmonton was a very special event. We were pleased that there were about 44 people who attended it. The ladies of the McKernan Church graciously served us a delicious breakfast.

At the breakfast Victor Gunst told about the special celebrations he and his siblings shared with their parents, who are now with the Lord. In our next issue of this paper we will include some of his insights.



MERRY CHRISTMAS

RESEARCHERS WE HAVE HELPED

The Andrews Street Church, now called the Latta Road Church, is planning to celebrate their 150th anniversary. Rob Cunningham is working on their anniversary book. He was here for a week to find materials in our archives. He told us often, "there is so much information here!"

Lloyd Harsch has begun work on the History of all the Baptist churches in North Dakota. He was here one very full day to do some of the research.

Friederick Teutsch from Germany is researching the life of Carl Fuelbrandt. His wife and her brother were here for a day to find some important details that they needed for their book.

Rev. Donald Miller is researching the history of the immigrants who came from the Vohnia area of Poland.

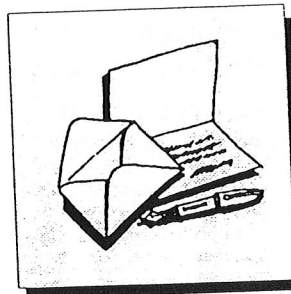
PLEASE HELP

We are exploring the possibility of being the clearing house for obituary requests. However, we will need the cooperation of many people to inform us of deaths by sending the obituaries from your local newspaper or from the funeral service.

The Heritage Commission is considering compiling an index of all the obituaries that have been printed in Der Sendbote and the Baptist Herald. If you know of such an index that has been done already, please inform us.

The Heritage Commission is interested in securing a copy of Emma Rauschenbusch Clough's book "While Sewing Sandals". If you know of someone who has a copy, please tell us!

Suggestion: If your church has a cemetery plot, it would be wise to take photographs of each grave marker for part of your historical collections. If you do this, we would like one set of the pictures for our files here at the archives.



Let us hear from you! Your thoughts and opinions can make a difference!

DONORS:

Dr. Gilbert Schneider, former missionary to Cameroon, has sent copies of some of his publications which include:

MEK WE KOT PANABU
My Favorite African Recipes
Scripture Cards with Abbia designs
Abbia Cards
African Proverbs
Stretch Grandpa, Stretch!

These items will be available either as a bonus for becoming a member or for sale.

Margaret Kittlitz has given the Heritage Commission a lady's hand embroidered Cameroon robe she received from a police officer that she helped through school. She also sent a unique picture of some Cameroon houses on a piece of cloth.

The Minutes of the Northern North Dakota Association from 1947-1997 and the early ones from the South Dakota/Wyoming Association have been added to our archives. The minutes are in excellent order and condition.

Our NAB Church at Plum Creek, SD will be holding their final services this year. A closing service is planned for Dec. 13, 1997.

“” “”

Quoted:

Joe Suilman, a fellow collector of memorabilia in Minnesota: “You know, my grandmother always told me, ‘You got to learn until your fingers are all the same length.’ In other words, you never can learn it all.”

Our Volunteers Speak:

L. Westerman, M. Buseman, A. Johnson

When we volunteers were asked for our views of work in the Archives of the North American Baptist Conference one comment was: “If you want any history of the Denomination this is the place. A good place for history buffs who have this kind of interest.” Another was; “It is a learning experience.”

Perhaps you are not aware of the fact that we volunteers work every Tuesday afternoon in a small place, where boxes and boxes of publications are sorted and filed into categories. We try to identify countless pictures of unidentified people. The faces look familiar but to put names to the faces is not always easy. As we sort through this material and find items of interest we share with each other and the people in the front office of the Heritage Commission.

We also realize what a heritage we as a conference have when we read about people from past years who were faithful in the Lord's work, giving good leadership from the church members to the presidents of our schools and the leaders in our Conference. This is all a part of our “Learning Experience.”

If you would like to have a better view of the volunteer's work, we invite you to drop in any Tuesday afternoon and see what we are doing. Perhaps you too would like to join us.

One of us has had the privilege of visiting museums and archives; this has prompted dreams of day when the NABC Heritage Commission can match some of those marvelous facilities and operations.