

# Heritage Horizons

...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

## Point of View

This issue is dedicated to looking at highlights of the past 49 triennials and the theme and hopes for the 50th Triennial Conference of North American Baptist Churches. The major sources of information for these observations are:

Ramaker (1924). *The German Baptists of North America: An Outline of their History*;

Von Berge (1943). *These Glorious Years: The Centenary History of German Baptists of North America 1843-1943*

Woyke (1979). *Heritage and Ministry of the North American Baptist Conference*

*Baptist Herald* reports of Triennial Conferences and the timeline of North American Baptist history

Editor: Staff

## Inside this Issue

1. Prelude to fifty triennials
- 2-7. Highlights and items of interest for each triennial
4. Armchair Traveler

## Director's Notes by Jackie Howell

### Prelude to 50 triennials

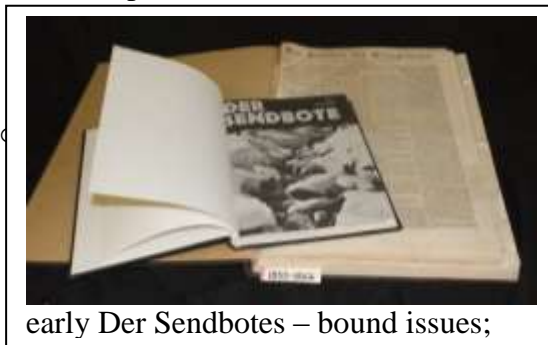
The year 2012 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> Triennial Conference meeting of North American Baptist Churches. This issue of the *Heritage Horizons* is a look back over time with a brief snapshot of each of the Triennials. Highlights along with interesting sidelights are included.

“The first conference of German Baptists in North America was held at the First German Baptist Church of Philadelphia, PA, Nov 6-12, 1851. It was called “The First Conference of Pastors and Co-Workers of the German Churches of Baptized Christians (usually called Baptists.)”. The last three words were not only in parentheses, but in much smaller print. There was no opportunity for the local churches to designate delegates. For this reason it was named a conference of pastors and co-workers. It is significant that the words “and churches” was not added until 1858, and that representation of churches by delegates did not come into general practice until the organization of the first Triennial General Conference in 1865.”(Woyke, p. 3)

We will tell  
the next generation  
about the glorious deeds  
of the LORD  
So each generation  
should set its hope  
anew on God,  
not forgetting  
his glorious miracles  
and obeying  
his commands.  
Psalm 78:46,7 (NLT)

## 1 Wilmont, ON 1865

- K. A. Fleischmann, moderator.
- Adopted rules for business.
- Single publication society, *Der Sendbote* as official publication
- Approved local church delegate concept
- Adopted Constitution & bylaws
- Organized fund for aged ministers, widows and orphans



## 2 Cincinnati, OH 1868

- J. C. Haselhuhn, moderator
- Established cooperation with American Baptist Home Missionary Society for the promotion of missionary work among the German immigrants. This arrangement continued for nearly half a century and contributed immeasurably to the growth of the conference.

## 3 New York, NY 1871

- Moved Publication Society from Cincinnati to Cleveland
- J. C. Haselhuhn appointed Western Conference missionary secretary
- Children's Home established in St Louis, MO



## 4 Chicago, IL 1874

- G. A. Schulte, moderator
- First Sunday school hymnbook published "Little Songbird"
- Elected a second professor to the seminary, Hermann Schaeffer
- Purchased a home in Rochester for German students

## 5 Buffalo, NY 1877

- J. C. Haselhuhn, moderator
- Incorporation of Publication Society reported
- Presented plans for erection of new publication building
- Voted on incorporation as an Educational Union for Ministerial Education

## 6 St Louis, MO 1880

- H. M. Schaeffer, moderator
- Missionary George N. Thomssen and wife departed for India under appointment of the American Baptist Missionary Union.
- August Rauschenbusch took a Seminary sabbatical year in Germany
- A gas explosion added a thrill and endangered the lives of the delegates

## 7 Cleveland, OH 1883

- J. C. Grimmell became the first General Missionary Secretary (part-time)
- E. C. Deckman, moderator
- 10,000 members
- 49 home missionaries
- Jacob Gubelmann was elected as the third professor at the seminary

## 8 Detroit, MI 1886

- Beginning of Young People's Society
- 161 churches, 13,000 members
- 55 home missionaries
- Mission support to Germany
- Dr. August Rauschenbusch announced retirement after 28 years of service – surrendered half his salary to provide for appointment before retirement became effective

## 9 Milwaukee, WI 1889

- Ramaker elected as director of German American Academy – to strengthen preparation for seminary
- Completion of new publication building reported
- 170 churches
- 60 home missionaries
- Missionaries to Brazil

## 10 Chicago, IL 1892

- G.A. Schulte becomes first full-time General Missionary Secretary
- “Jugend Herold” launched with Walter Rauschenbusch as first editor
- Albert Ramaker and Lewis Kaiser became members of the theological faculty of the seminary



## 11 Dayton, OH 1895

- Prof. Hermann Schaeffer charged with responsibility of collecting money toward a proposed \$100,000 seminary endowment
- Negotiations with a Berlin committee concerning cooperation in the Cameroon mission was reported
- Children’s Day to be an annual church event with missionary offering

## 12 St Louis, MO 1898

- J. C. Grimmell, moderator and editor of Der Sendbote
- Deaths of Hermann Schaeffer, Conrad Bodenbender, Peter Wedel & Heinrich Enns (last 2 – young missionaries to Cameroon) spread a veil of sorrow over conference

## 13 Berlin (now Kitchener), ON 1901

- L. Kaiser, moderator (elected in 1898 and served until 1922)
- Conference “stormy”; secretary did not record details

## 14 Chicago, IL 1904

- Program includes pictures of the nine churches in the Chicago area; group photo of the pastors
- 248 delegates with 548 in attendance
- Walter Rauschenbusch resigned to become history chair at Rochester Theological Seminary [English]

## 15 Buffalo, NY 1907

- Historical view of Buffalo churches
- Women’s work was first organized on a denomination-wide basis – called Women’s Missionary Union; not mentioned in conference minutes
- Hermann Von Berge elected to seminary faculty

## 16 Milwaukee, WI 1910

- Individual societies within conference met:
- L. Kaiser, moderator
- “Evangeliums Saenger”, new hymnbook by Rauschenbusch and Sankey made its debut
- G. A. Schulte reported Jubilee Offering of \$100,000 (started in 1889)
- “Glaubensharfe” (hymnbook) also to be revised
- Missionary George Kampfer with Emma Kose, his bride, received conference blessing as they departed for mission field in Assam, India

## 17 Madison, SD 1913

- First meeting held beyond the Mississippi River
- Supported 28 mission workers in Europe
- Created a field secretary position to promote the Sunday school and youth work – Wm. Kuhn elected to fill position
- Portland Home opened
- Ford car provided delegates with dusty “joy rides” to Lake Madison
- G. A. Schulte’s *Memories* printed and sold at Conference

## 18 Detroit, MI 1916

- Pastors' pension fund becomes reality
- Children's home moved to St Louis, MO
- William Kuhn became General Mission Secretary
- World War I raging – opening sermon on “The Peace of God” by Jacob Meier
- Model T-Three was \$1,000 and ministers were becoming car-minded
- Some thought this would be culmination of German Baptist work in America
- Von Berge reported that the “Neue Glaubensharfe” had been completed – proved to be a blessing to churches

## 19 Chicago, IL 1919

- WWI ended; money fluid – raised offering amount
- F. A. Blaedow argues that Conference must turn to English language
- Voted to move General Missionary Society (Conference Office) west to Forest Park, IL
- Approved a million dollar offering for triennium
- Note: in 1920 German Baptists became independent of American Baptist Home Mission Society

## 20 St Paul, MN 1922

- \$1,056,273 million dollar offering received
- Plans drawn for European mission work
- Baptist Young Peoples' and Sunday School Workers' Union organized
- Proposed publication to serve the denominational interests in the English language – *Baptist Herald* was outcome
- L. Kaiser finishes 22 years as moderator



## 21 Pittsburgh, PA 1925

- H. Von Berge, moderator
- Voted to change name of Triennial Conference to General Conference to distinguish it from the 9 local conferences

- Approved erection of new publication building and extensive renovation and modification of the seminary building

## 22 Chicago, IL 1928

- H. Von Berge, moderator
- Mission work in the Cameroons was again supported. A two-language hymnal “Selected Gospel Songs”, made its debut
- Arthur Schade was elected field secretary of the Young People's and Sunday School Workers' Union

## 23 Detroit, MI 1931

- General Missionary Society (GMS) observes 50 years
- Paul Gebauer becomes first missionary to Cameroon appointed solely by GMS
- Economic depression had brought worldwide gloom despair; retrenchment was the order of the day in all conference activities

## 24 Milwaukee, WI 1934

- Wm. F. Grosser becomes first conference treasurer
- General Council established, all societies represented
- Seminary changes name to German Baptist Seminary
- Held a sunrise service on the lake front in Milwaukee
- Baptist Residence New York City
- Dr. Martin Leuschner as *Baptist Herald* editor

## 25 Portland, OR 1937

- “We Dare not Fail”
- O. E. Krueger, moderator
- Business sessions conducted largely in English
- 850 delegates representing 126 churches
- Silver jubilee
- Several couples “honeymooned” at this conference
- WMU scholarship fund established

## 26 Burlington, IA 1940

- “The Unity of the Spirit in the Bonds of Peace”
- 1,154 attendees
- 266 churches with 38,312 members
- Conducted totally in English
- Welcome address poem composed and recited by Prof. F.W.C. Meyer
- Promotional secretary appointed
- Bismarck Retirement Home opened
- WMU day of prayer material published

## 27 Milwaukee, WI 1944

- “With Christ throughout these years”
- Conference was postponed from 1943 related to support of the war effort
- O. E. Krueger, moderator
- G. A. Lang, President Seminary in Rochester
- *Baptist Herald* became official publication
- WMU included in Conference budget
- Rev. H. B. Dymmel appointed first home mission secretary. Nine new missionaries to Cameroon presented.

## 28 Tacoma, WA 1946

- “Henceforth!”
- Motto: “With Christ Throughout These Years”
- G. A. Lang, moderator
- Name change to “North American Baptist General Conference”
- Conference reorganized
- Adopted a new constitution which called for a larger and more representative General Council

## 29 Sioux Falls, SD 1949

- “Light or darkness”
- Motto: “The light will triumph!”
- G. A. Lang, moderator
- Decision to move NAB Seminary to Sioux Falls – groundbreaking conducted
- Christian Training



- Institute (CTI) made a cooperating agency
- Church loan fund created
- June 1 *Baptist Herald* article: Special trains to Sioux Falls: Conference train leaving from Chicago with special Pullman cars leaving from Tacoma, WA (Friday eve) with timelines for boarding the train Seattle, Aberdeen, SD to Mitchell and arrival in Sioux Falls Monday morning for August 22-28 meeting
- 42,000 members
- Raise \$1.5 million in 3 years
- \$600,000 for relief

## 30 Philadelphia, PA 1952

- “Love Divine, all loves excelling”
- G. A. Lang, moderator
- Plans for special trains for the Milwaukee line and Northern Pacific Railroad to travel to Philadelphia published in March for August 20-26 meeting



- 55 missionaries
- 66 mission-aided churches in North America
- 278 churches, 44,019 members
- CTI new building

## 31 Waco, Texas 1955

- “What the spirit saith to the churches Rev. 2:7”
- Walter Grosser, moderator
- As I see it! By Rev. Charles Zummach – a review of highlights and decisions of the General Conference since 1913
- 288 churches, 47,319 members
- Youth cooperative society formed
- Children’s Home closed
- *North American Hymnal* published
- “Spontaneous Christian Warmth”
- Texas missions

## 32 Edmonton, AB 1958

- “His word in Our World”
- Theme “Continue in My Word” John 8:21b-3:2
- Walter Grosser, moderator
- 6,000 attendees – includes children & youth
- Described as “by far the largest and most thrilling North American Baptist Conference Session ever held.”

## 33 Minneapolis, MN 1961

- Theme: “Greater things through Christ”
- “Launch forth: to know Him and the power of His Resurrection”
- John Wobig, moderator
- Resolution on religious liberty adopted; approved 6-fold definition of separation of church and state; affirmed Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs as a cooperative denominational agency
- Church Extension Builders Fund launched
- Dept of CE replaces Sunday School Union – Gideon Zimmerman
- 2,200 attendees

## 34 Sacramento, CA 1964

- “The everlasting God has spoken: Our Help in Ages Past, Our Hope for Years to Come” Text: Rev. 1:8
- Ervin Marklein, moderator
- Sessions broadcast live on local FM radio
- “*Opening Doors in Japan*” (1964) published in Japan, available for purchase
- Short term missionaries appointed
- 325 churches, 52,625 members
- 4,000 church extension builders

## 35 Detroit, MI 1967

- “The conquering faith in this age of crises”
- A. Dale Ihre, moderator
- Theme for triennium: “Learning to Witness”
- German worship service held Saturday evening
- Capital funds drive priorities identified with goal of \$1 million
- Women’s ministries celebrates 60 years

## 36 Winnipeg, MB 1970

- “Renewing the Church in a new day”
- Theme: “Christ for Our Generation”
- Stan Johnson, moderator
- CEIF established
- Association representatives to General Council.
- 343 churches, 54,997 members, 113 missionaries



## 37 Wichita, KS 1973

- “Reconciling the world through Christ”
- Aaron Buhler, moderator
- Special recognition of Rev. Dan Fuchs
- LaVerna Mehlhaff first full-time women’s worker
- CE Dept became Church Ministries
- First meeting of Association Archivists with Joyce Ringering and Reinhold Kerstan
- CEIF incorporated in US

## 38 Portland, OR 1976

- “Priorities for a worthy future”
- Delmar Wesseler, moderator
- 105 churches report 150,000 contacts for Christ
- Name change: “North American Baptist Conference” (dropped “General” from name)
- 40 church extension churches
- Moved office to Oakbrook Terrace, IL

## 39 Bismarck, ND 1979

- “Building relationships through Christ”
- Ken Fischer, moderator
- Approved Baptist Beliefs task force report
- John Binder became executive director
- Frank Woyke. *Heritage and Ministry of the North American Baptist Conference* published
- 357 churches, 57,046 members

**40 Niagara Falls, NY 1982**

- “Being the people of God”
- Peter Fehr, moderator
- Changed structure to provide for area ministers
- 366 churches, 59,370 members

**41 Anaheim, CA 1985**

- “A people of hope for a world in despair”
- Gene Kern, moderator
- Report of task force on ordination
- 4287 delegates and visitors
- Chuck Colson opening speaker

**42 Calgary, AB 1988**

- “Come together, share the vision”
- Ernie Radke, moderator
- Adopted “Vision 2000”
- 8000-9000 attendees
- Missionaries to Eastern Europe

**43 Milwaukee, WI 1991**

- “Friendfest – faithful to Christ’s vision”
- Harvey Mehlhaff, moderator

**44 Dallas, TX 1994**

- “A heart that cares”
- Speakers included Calvin Miller, Hugh Litchfield, Jeannette Cleft George and the A. D. Players

**45 Edmonton, AB 1997**

- “Northern light: experiencing God”
- 6000 attended
- Speakers included Joseph Aldrich, John Piper, John Maxwell and Ralph Bell.
- Phil Yntema elected Executive Director

**46 Sacramento, CA 2000**

- “Rush for the gold: sharing Christ’s riches”
- Opening night – Steve Green Concert/ Concert of Prayer

**47 Sioux Falls, SD 2003**

- “Forging frontiers for Christ: staking new claims”
- Large exhibit room with many vendors from Christian organizations
- Evening sessions in arena opened to public to hear speakers – Ann Graham Lotz, Jim Cymbala, Damaris Carbaugh, Philip Yancy and Ken Davis
- Moderator: Harvey Wilkie
- Some budget cuts in response to overall economic conditions
- Total delegates 882
- Ron Berg elected Executive Director

**48 Estes Park, CO 2006**

- “Amazing God in an awesome place”
- Gordon Unger, moderator
- All meals in a common dining hall
- Gordon Harris, Interim Exec. Director
- Keynote speaker Priscilla Shirer
- Women’s Ministries celebrates 100 years of serving Christ

**49 Winnipeg, MB 2009**

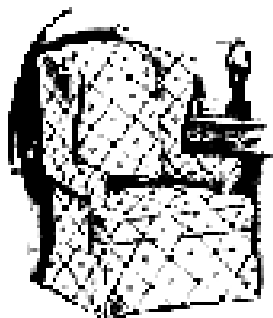
- “Moving forward together”
- Rob McClelland delivered opening address on the theme, focusing on church multiplication and leadership development
- Other speakers: Ron Allen, Mike Chan Perkinson, Julia Robertson and Tim Schroeder

**50 Orlando, FL 2012**

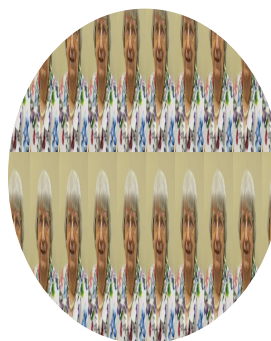
- “Next . . .”
  - Impact the NEXT Community
  - Reach the NEXT Nation
  - Equip the NEXT Generation
- Francis Chan – keynote speaker
- Break-out sessions feature new initiatives and opportunities for NEXT . . .

# THE ARMCHAIR TRAVELER

by *Archivist Berneice Westerman*



## What's Next?



Open doors given by God: A mother's prayer telling Him she would let her very sick daughter obey Him if He would permit her to live; A father's agreement to permit his daughter to obey God's call.

A question to that daughter by a missionary on the Board of NAB Missions: "Are you willing to work anywhere in Cameroon?" Later she was moved 7 times in one four-year term. She remembered that Laura Reddig had asked about her willingness to serve anywhere. She worked on five of our mission stations.

There were open doors of opportunity—walking the coastal area, visiting the elementary schools, guiding teachers, and seeing the children eager to learn.

There were opportunities in the classrooms, training teachers, teaching missionary children, opening a girl's secondary school which has just celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> year ([www.sakerpride.com](http://www.sakerpride.com)), and keeping track of money matters in the main office of the Cameroon Mission Administrative Office.

Bamenda church gave her the opportunity to have a newly baptized member of the church come to her house for Bible study and counseling.

After time on the Mission field, she came home to learn that she was no longer needed in her home church, but God had already opened the door to "recycling" into the Heritage Commission as an assistant, and then as an associate, and now as the Archivist, still doing research. So what's next? As long as God gives me strength He will continue to open doors for me to serve Him.

My desire for our Conference is that we look forward but do not forget to look back at the foundations and past events for help in choosing the direction of our future roads and opportunities.



"The Armchair Traveler" has appeared in every issue of the *Heritage Horizons* since Fall 2003.