



The Northeastern UNITED METHODIST HISTORICAL BULLETIN



Number 177

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Lancaster County to Welcome 2018 NEJCAH: We're more than Just Amish Country! *by Joseph DiPaolo*

Lancaster County United Methodists and the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference will welcome the Northeastern Jurisdictional Commission on Archives and History for its annual meeting, May 8-10. The theme will be "Awakenings," evoking the impact of the first and second Great Awakenings, so much in evidence in the Lancaster County area.

The region we will tour is rich in United Methodist history. The county itself has nearly 80 UM congregations. Of the approximately 50 Heritage Landmarks of the UMC globally, two of them, Boehm's Chapel and Long's Barn, are in Lancaster County. A third, Albright's Chapel – where Evangelical Church founder Jacob Albright is buried – is not far away in Lebanon County.

Lancaster County is where Martin Boehm, co-founder of the United Brethren in Christ, had his conversion experience and began preaching as a Mennonite. His colleague, William Otterbein, had a similar experience in the city of Lancaster, while serving First Reformed Church, a congregation that is still active in town. And of course, it was at Isaac Long's Barn that Boehm and Otterbein met and embraced, as Otterbein exclaimed *Wir sind bruder* -- "we are brothers!"

English speaking Methodists ventured into Lancaster as early as the 1772, when Joseph Pilmore, one of the first two missionaries Wesley's sent to America, preached at the city courthouse. Robert Strawbridge is known to have preached here in 1781, and perhaps even earlier. Thomas Ware, who was present at the 1784 Christmas Conference and later wrote an important early memoir, lived in Lancaster County for a number of years (in Strasburg), and met his wife here. Bishop Asbury mentions preaching in Thomas Ware's orchard in July 1799.

Lancaster County gave us Henry Boehm, Martin and Eva's son, who became Francis Asbury's longest traveling companion. Henry's *Reminiscences*, published when he was 90 in 1865 (he lived to 100) is a treasure-house of anecdotes that take us back to the early days

of the Methodist movement in America.

Henry tells a fascinating story about being in Lancaster City in 1807 to visit a printer about a translation of the *Discipline* into German. There was as yet no established Methodist congregation in the city, and Henry was staying at a public house. Annoyed by a noisy ruckus in the street – it turned out that the Lutherans were holding a lottery to raise money for the erection of a church steeple – Henry decided to take a walk, and ran into a Methodist woman from Germantown. She told him about a couple named Benedict recently awakened to God at camp meeting, then "seeking the Lord," and that he should visit them. Henry did, and the couple began hosting services in their home and organized a class. That is the origin of today's First UMC, which we will visit on our tour. Postscript: Trinity Lutheran Church still has a copy of the 1807 handbill advertising the lottery!

We will gather on Tuesday, May 8, for opening worship, some initial business, and a keynote lecture by Dr. Mark Draper of Evangelical Seminary on "Awakenings." On Wednesday, our tour begins at Boehm's Chapel, continues through Lancaster City with a stop at Bethel AME Church, once a stop on the Underground Railroad; then a "drive-by" to view Old First Reformed UCC, where Otterbein once pastored. Then we will head to First UMC for lunch and an historical presentation, which will include the unique connection Lancaster has with Korean Methodism, through missionaries Henry and Ella Appenzeller. We will spend the afternoon at Ephrata Cloister, site of a unique intentional Christian community founded in 1732, and now a museum. We'll have dinner at First UMC of Ephrata, and an evening program.

For our closing day, Thursday, we'll finish up any remaining business, and conclude with a communion service, led by Bishop Peggy Johnson.

Lancaster County looks forward to welcoming you in May!

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DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE BULLETIN: March 1, 2018

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Waterbury Center Community Church Dedicates New Memorial Stone

On a blustery November Saturday, about a dozen individuals gathered outside the Waterbury Center, VT, Community church to dedicate a memorial stone at as the center of a small garden where members of the church or the surrounding community will be able to quietly pray or meditate. The garden is located directly behind the church and during the summer months will be planted with flowers and bushes. The stone, which features the first verse of Psalm 121, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help," contains a list of names with birth and death dates of individuals who have been active members or pastors of the church at one time or another. A small bench faces the stone.



Betty Jones, Historian and Rev. John Lucy, Pastor at the new memorial stone

The idea for the Memorial stone and garden were inspired by local church historian, Betty Jones. Betty's son, Dale, a local firefighter, died at the age of 27. She saw a similar memorial garden at her sister's church in Florida and felt this would be an appropriate way to remember her son and others important in the life of the church.

Following the dedication, Betty presented an overview of the church's history. The first Methodist preacher in the town was likely Lorenzo Dow, in 1799, when he made his first foray into the newly-developed Essex Circuit of the New York Conference, which included the entire area from Lake Champlain, east into Canada. Churches in nearby Stowe and Morrisville also trace their roots to Dow's 1799 visits to the area.

A society was organized at Waterbury Center the following year with Thomas Guptil and fourteen other members, but it was not until 1833 that the church building was completed and dedicated under the leadership of Building Committee members George Scagel, who donated the land, Lemuel Lyon and Capt. Stephen Jones. Unlike many early New England churches, it was built of brick, the outer layer being water-struck brick, which is thinner and denser than normal brick. Four thicknesses of brick formed the walls and stone slabs faced the underpinning.

Originally, the interior was one large room with a gallery reached by a short flight of stairs. The pews were the old-fashioned "box" type with doors that buttoned shut. In 1858 when the church was remodeled, the sanctuary relocated to the second floor with more modern pews.

In 1978 the Waterbury Center Community Church was added to the National Register of Historic Places. It is one of the few currently active UM churches in Vermont that is listed on the National Register.

The event closed with an impressive display of items related to the nearly 185 years of the congregation's history.



Waterbury Center Community Church

Northeastern Jurisdiction Commission on Archives and History
Annual Meeting

“Awakenings”

May 8-10, 2018

Hosted by the Eastern Pennsylvania Annual Conference CCAH

at the DoubleTree Resort, Lancaster, PA

Registration includes meals, admissions, and transportation to events.

Early registration by April 7, 2017 \$300

Registration after April 8, 2017 \$400

(A limited number of scholarships are available. Please see the registration form below.
Special consideration will be given to those from small churches or traveling long distances.)

Educational events will focus on the rich spiritual heritage of the Lancaster County, PA area and some of the awakenings it has seen. It was here that Philip Otterbein and Martin Boehm met and declared, “Wir sind brudern,” and gave birth to the United Brethren in Christ. The area was well known to Methodist Episcopal and Evangelical preachers and to the African Methodist Episcopal Church as well as being home to a wide variety of Anabaptist groups tracing their roots to Germany and Switzerland. Less well-known are its ties to the beginnings of Methodism on the Korean peninsula.

A tour of the area to be held on Wednesday will take us to key sites in this history, including Boehm’s Chapel United Methodist Church, the Bethel AME Cultural Center, First United Methodist Church in Lancaster, and the Ephrata Cloister.

Our keynote speaker on Tuesday, May 8, will be Dr. Mark Draper of the Evangelical Seminary in Myerstown, PA. Bishop Peggy Johnson of the Philadelphia Area will preach for our closing worship on Thursday morning.

Lodging at the DoubleTree Resort can be arranged by attendees by calling 717-464-2711.

Room	Single Rate	Double Rate	Triple Rate	Quad Rate
Standard	119.00	119.00	134.00	149.00

These rates are per person, per night inclusive of applicable taxes and gratuity.

Please note: Complimentary shuttle transportation to and from the Lancaster train station, airport, and bus terminal are available through the hotel. Arrangements must be made in advance. Photographs will be taken during the gathering and may be used for publicity by NEJCAH. A list of registrants will also be made for private use of the attendees. If you do not want your photo used or information shared, please notify the registrar when you check in.

Northeastern Jurisdiction Commission on Archives and History Annual Meeting

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Annual Conference: _____

Are you requesting scholarship assistance? Yes No

Please send registration with a check made out to Eastern PA Annual Conference (with "NEJCAH Meeting" on the memo line) to:

Ms. Betty Henderson
3413 W. Allegheny Ave.
Philadelphia, PA 19132-1021

bhende86341@verizon.net
(215) 226-5268

From the General Secretary

A Sixth Sola

It's now wintertime so perhaps it's time to put away the "Reformation 500" t-shirts I bought. Two I found on-line were irresistible. The first depicts a headshot of a rather pugnacious-looking Martin Luther boasting, "I came to drink beer and reform the Church. And I'm out of beer!" The other t-shirt depicts a large hammer and nail and says "No, the door was fine. I'm just fixing your theology." A little Reformation humor, yes?

However, there were more deeply soul-stirring messages to ponder during this Reformation milestone, too. One came in a Crowdcast with GCAH friend and associate, Dr. Justo Gonzalez, who led an online discussion, "500 years later: What is the importance of the Reformation today?"

Here is a quick refresher: Church historians summarize the Reformation in "five solas." These phrases represent the core principles of the Reformers, standing in contrast to the teaching and experience of the Church in their time. "Sola" is a Latin word meaning "alone" or "only." The corresponding big-five phrases are: *sola scriptura* (scripture alone), *sola fide* (faith alone), *sola gratia* (grace alone), *sola Christus* (Christ alone), and *sola Deo Gloria* (the glory of God alone).

Professor Gonzalez suggested a sixth – *sola caritas*. Only love. This sixth sola not only rounds out the first five, it adds a distinctively Methodist streak to an era of history more associated with Lutherans and Presbyterians. A few hundred years after Hus, Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli, John and Charles Wesley along with their friends stirred a new generation of reformation. They kicked the salvation by grace through faith idea up a notch with a fresh understanding and enthusiastic witness that once God's amazing grace is experienced, a person can't help but be transformed. They believed that experiencing divine love changes people and by the resultant action of the Holy Spirit causes a chain reaction. People change other people and then those people change things – the beloved become lovers, the healed become healers and the redeemed in turn become redeemers. This is what the Wesley brothers and company experienced and passed on in a reformation of the Reformation of sorts.

Experiencing God's love in Jesus Christ—this is the idea behind the sixth sola. *Sola caritas*. Love alone. The basic Methodist theological tome, its hymnbook, has sung this sixth sola since the beginning:

'Tis Love! 'tis Love! Thou didst for me!
I hear Thy whisper in my heart;
The morning breaks, the shadows flee,
Pure, universal love Thou art;
To me, to all Thy mercies move;
Thy nature and Thy name is Love.
Lame as I am, I take the prey,
Hell, earth, and sin, with ease o'ercome;
I leap for joy, pursue my way,
And as a bounding hart fly home,
Thro' all eternity to prove
Thy nature and Thy name is Love.

("Come Thou Traveler Unknown," vs. 9, 14. Charles Wesley 1762, *United Methodist Hymnal*, No. 387. Originally John and Charles Wesley's *Hymns and Sacred Poems*, 1742).

Lest I wax too doctrinally here, this sixth sola—like United Methodist DNA—harmonizes dogma with the experiential. It is something "proved" by living a holy life—not a "holier than thou" life, mind you—but a life made worthwhile as it engages and is enthused by its vital contact and relationship with "Love Divine All Loves Excelling."

My reformation 2.0 time with Professor Gonzalez reconnects me with the deep denominational roots that being IN Christ IS faith working in and through love. I scribbled something that Professor Gonzalez said that continues to resonate: "What brings God's people together is not an agreement on doctrine but recovering and responding to Jesus at the center of the table, Jesus inviting us all, calling us to be a community of love."

But what does this love look like, you ask? Galatians, chapter 5, and its recitation of the "fruits of the Spirit" is at least a place to start: "affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely" (Galatians 5:22-24, *The Message*).

To the Church whose history is a continuous state of reformation, with "Under Construction" signs hung around every corner and along a way forward where the Holy Spirit is still working, hold onto the sixth sola – *sola caritas*.

How's your Latin? *Ube caritas et amor. Ubi caritas Deus ibi est*. Where charity and love are, God is there (words of an ancient Christian hymn associated with the liturgy of foot washing, popularized at Taize, France).

Come to think of it, winter or not, I'm gonna pull that first t-shirt from the drawer. I mean the one with Martin Luther saying he'd come to drink beer and reform the Church AND THAT HE WAS OUT OF BEER. Whether you imbibe in suds or not, you have to love its no holds barred passion and intensity to reform the Church. "If we will open ourselves to the renewal power of the Holy Spirit," said Bishop Rosemarie Wenner to an ecumenical Reformation 500 event in Wittenberg, Germany, "reformation will happen again and again." I'm praying that the United Methodist contribution to the history of repeated reformation will be *sola caritas*.

In the meantime, I'm thinking of a Methodist reformation t-shirt of our own. Cokesbury, are you listening? It pictures Charles Wesley and a G clef standing for the faith we sing and words we know by heart: "Lost in wonder, LOVE and praise" ("Love Divine All Loves Excelling," v.4. Charles Wesley (1747), *The United Methodist Hymnal*, No. 384).

—Fred Day

Bishop Felton May Buried at Barratt's *by Phil Lawton*

Visitors to Barratt's are accustomed to seeing grave markers in the cemetery on the south side of the low brick wall near the Chapel, but now there is also a marker that stands apart on the north side of the wall directly in front of the Chapel. Barratt's has a long standing offer to provide space in front of the Chapel for any United Methodist bishop who wishes to be buried there. Several years ago Bishop Felton May accepted the offer; when he died in February 2017, his ashes were interred there. On September 16 in Barratt's Chapel, Bishop Peggy Johnson led a Service of Remembrance, Thanksgiving, and Dedication of Memorial Plaque with many of Bishop May's family and friends in attendance.

Felton Edwin May was born in Chicago in 1935. Ordained in the Northern Illinois Conference, he served two appointments in the Chicago area before transferring to the Peninsula Conference, where he served as assistant director of the Methodist Action Program, pastor, District Superintendent, and Conference Council Director. He was elected to the episcopacy in 1984. As a bishop he was assigned first to the Harrisburg Area for four years and then to the Washington Area for eight. Following his retirement

in 2004 he accepted a position as a dean at Philander Smith College, Little Rock, Arkansas. Throughout his career Bishop May was a tireless advocate for civil rights, social justice, and educational opportunities. He led efforts to combat substance abuse, violence, and poverty, and played an active role in fighting the effects of the global AIDS epidemic. Barratt's is honored that the bishop and his family have chosen here as his resting place.



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