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## FROM THE EDITOR

During his life, Luke Keefer, Jr. achieved a well-deserved reputation as a pre-eminent Brethren in Christ theologian. Before the health issues that eventually took his life prevented him from further research and writing, Luke was planning a series of lectures on heresy, inspired by a controversy involving an accusation of heresy at Ashland Seminary where he was teaching. His friend, neighbor, and seminary colleague Rob Douglass took Luke's notes and preliminary writings on heresy and fleshed them out in an essay that appeared in the festschrift he and another colleague, Wendy Corbin Reuschling, edited in honor of Luke. Ever since *Celebrations and Convictions: Honoring the Life and Legacy of Luke L. Keefer, Jr.* was published in late 2015, I have been hoping to reprint this essay in the journal, and finally with this edition have made that hope a reality. Rob has done the church a great service in not only putting some of Luke's last unfinished theological work in usable form, but also contributing some of his own scholarship on the subject of heresy and how to think about it.

This edition of the journal also continues the comprehensive history of Sikalongo Mission in Zambia by Dwight Thomas. Part 3 focuses on the years leading up to and including the birth of Zambia as an independent nation (it was formerly Northern Rhodesia, a British colony) and the transfer of church leadership from the Brethren in Christ Church in North America to Zambian leadership.

While this is a history of one mission station, it is much more than that; it sensitively raises a number of issues that would be worth further consideration. For example: In a section entitled "Unsung Heroes and Heroines," Dwight recognizes the roles of African support staff, missionary women (especially single women), and missionary children. He describes the reluctance of missionaries to be involved in the political movements toward national independence, an understandable reluctance given historic Brethren in Christ separatism, but one which may have been misinterpreted by native Zambians. He openly names the feeling of Sikalongo Mission folks that their mission was (perhaps unintentionally) considered less important than other mission endeavors, especially Macha Mission. (Editor's personal note: even as a missionary child in Northern Rhodesia in 1958-1961, I picked up on this attitude even though I wouldn't have been able to articulate it at

the time.) Dwight's history of Sikalongo, therefore, not only tells the story of one mission, but also provides some welcome analysis from one who was not part of the original story but who has observed the mission, been a part of its ongoing life in more recent years, and talked extensively with Zambian church members and leaders. The last part of the history, bringing the story into the present and being co-written by Zambian leaders, will appear in a later edition of the journal.

Two additional articles are based on recent presentations, one at Messiah College in March and one at the historic Ringgold Meetinghouse in June. Greg Boyd was the speaker for the 2017 Schrag Lectures at Messiah College, and, as is our custom in the journal, we are reprinting the public lecture. Greg Boyd, senior pastor at Woodland Hills Church in St. Paul, Minnesota, is well-known in neo-Anabaptist circles, and has been a major influence on the theology of several current (many of the them younger) Brethren in Christ pastors. John Yeatts, retired from many years of teaching at Messiah College, was this year's speaker for the annual Heritage Service at Ringgold and told his personal story of "following peace and holiness," based on Hebrews 12:14. His talk is reproduced here.

Six book reviews complete the issue, including one on Greg Boyd's influential book, *The Myth of a Christian Nation*, by Tracie Hunter who was introduced to the book in one of the Brethren in Christ core courses.

Harriet Sider Bicksler, editor

**Correction:** In the April 2017 edition of the journal, we incorrectly identified one of the men in the photograph at the top of page 33. The person second from the right is Lewis B. Steckley, not Elmer Eyer. We apologize for the error.

## Heresy: A Troublesome Word

By J. Robert Douglass\*

In 2002, Ashland Theological Seminary invited renowned theologian, Clark Pinnock, to campus for the Fall Lecture Series. At this point of his life and career, Pinnock was exploring the idea of Open Theism for which he became somewhat of a lightning rod. Subsequently, at least one Christian radio station in the Columbus area began criticizing the seminary's invitation to this "heretic." Naturally, the implication was that the orthodoxy of the seminary was also now suspect. Luke Keefer once told me that this experience was what sparked his interest in the subject of heresy.

In 2007, Luke Keefer, Jr. took his last study leave with the seminary. During that time he went to England and researched the subject of heresy. The culmination of his research was to be delivered at the 2008 Fall Lecture Series of Ashland Theological Seminary. The title for the lectures was "Heresy: A Troublesome Word." Luke's planned topics for the three sessions were: 1) What Is Heresy?, 2) Historical Perspectives on Heresy, and 3) A Modest Proposal for Restoring the Disciplinary Task of the Church. Unfortunately, Luke's health issues made both the completion of the project and the delivery of the lectures impossible.

Initially, it was my hope to complete his research for him and to present it in this forum. To this end, Luke's wife, Doris, graciously gave me Luke's notes and some of the books that he purchased to do his research. However, while I had extensive research notes and drafts of outlines for the first two

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lectures, the amount of time it took retracing Luke's research combined with the length of the document that was emerging go beyond the scope of this current work. Perhaps more significantly, I was not able to discover anything that specifically aids in the construction of the third lecture, which is where Luke's own perspective and wisdom would have been experienced most keenly. Instead, what I offer in honor of my mentor and dear friend are my own thoughts on the subject, significantly informed by his words and research and framed by his planned presentation.

The first question that comes to my mind is this: why did Luke feel that heresy was a troublesome word? I believe Luke would respond that it is our poor use of the term that creates the problems. In his introduction to the first lecture, which is the largest section of fully written material, Luke proposed four factors that caused him to view the term as troublesome.

### **Why is Heresy a Troublesome Word?**

Luke's four points will provide the framework for the remainder of this study. While I will be addressing each, I will be condensing them into three types of problems. There are issues of definition (Luke's first point), issues of legitimate danger to the church (Luke's second point), and issues of the church's poor response (Luke's third and fourth points). In what follows, we will attempt to understand these problems more fully and explore possible solutions so that we may once again talk about and address heresy in appropriate ways.

### **Heresy can be troublesome because of the difficulty in defining it<sup>1</sup>.**

*First, as we will soon note, defining heresy is a difficult task. Everyone knows what it is until you have to produce a definition in written form. It is a little like the aroma of coffee. We all know what it is until we try to define it for someone who has never encountered coffee in the experience.*

Among the articles about the Pinnock controversy were some observations that Luke made. The following appears to be some of Luke's

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<sup>1</sup> The words in italics are taken from the notes of Luke's research on heresy. While I have included several lengthy passages, I decided that it is important to allow Luke to speak for himself as much as possible.

earliest writing on heresy. He observed:

*Words resemble people in many ways. First, they have an ancestry. Words do not just come into existence on their own. They have parents, who gave them birth. Sometimes their DNA is simple, and we can trace them to a person, a country, a language or a time period in which they originated. At other times their parentage is undetermined and we encounter them almost like orphans who have already reached adulthood. . . .*

*Secondly, words develop relationships. They form associations with their kin or their friends. In grammar we call these associations, synonyms. And they develop antagonisms toward other words that stand for contradictory concepts, what grammar calls antonyms. Like people, we come to know words by the friends they keep and the enemies they oppose.*

*Thirdly, words travel. They move from one area to another and change their language in the process. They also develop over time and take on new meanings and uses. Some get lost for a time, and when they are rediscovered they have changed. They are no longer what they used to be.*

*There is a fourth way that words resemble people. They frequently need redemption. They can be taken captive and must be set free from people and causes that treat them as unwilling slaves in their unholy deeds. Labels can become libels that maim and kill. Good words call out to us to set them free from the warmongers who use them as weapons for destruction.*

*Finally, words, like people have influence. Once they are embraced they can move people to actions that are noteworthy or reprehensible. Think of the use of words in propaganda or political slogans. Pin a label on a person or a group and it can control our emotional reactions in ways that defy rational behavior.*

*. . . Heresy is an emotionally charged word and a word with a long history. It has sent thousands of people to horrible, untimely deaths. It is a “dirty bomb” that Christians . . . unleash on others. . . . It is a word that needs redemption.*

The Greek word, *haireisis*, from which we get the word “heresy,” denotes the idea of choosing or choice. This choice also implies a sense of division

or separation.<sup>2</sup> It and its cognates are used in a variety of ways throughout the New Testament. The word is used rather innocently to express having been chosen, as in reference to Jesus in Matthew 12:18. It is also used in Acts to express various groups like the Sadducees (Acts 5:17), Pharisees (Acts 15:5) and even Christians (Acts 24:5 in referring to the “sect of the Nazarenes”). These examples suggest that the fundamental use of the term in the New Testament is to convey a faction or division in the Church that may or may not be connected to false teaching.

This certainly does not mean that the New Testament is unconcerned about correct doctrine. One need only study the passages that address terms like “false teachers” or “false prophets” to see that correct understanding and belief are extremely important. In 2 Peter 2, the term is used in the way we most commonly think of it—being connected to false teachers and false teaching. Yet, even in 2 Peter 2, *hairesis*, or division, is the result of false teaching rather than a synonym for it. In Titus 3:10, a form of the word is employed as an adjective describing people. It is the only instance in the New Testament where someone is referred to as a heretic. The letter clearly conveys the seriousness of the charge by instructing the reader to “have nothing more to do with” the heretics. However, the larger context of Titus 3:9-11 permits understanding a heretic as the New Revised Standard Version translates it, “anyone who causes divisions” rather than necessarily one who promulgates false teaching.

Another example can be found in Ephesians 4, even though the specific word for heresy is not used. Within the themes of unity of the church and maturity in faith, there is a verse about wrong teaching. We read, “We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people’s trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming” (Eph. 4:14). As indicated above, while right teaching is most assuredly important, its connection to the unity of the church is what matters fundamentally. It is also interesting to note the verse’s implication that the more mature we are in the faith, the less false teaching is an issue.

Our definitions of heresy can lead to trouble in another way. At times, when we use the term, we mean too little by it. For Christians today, the

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<sup>2</sup> “Nancy Ring, “Heresy,” in *The New Dictionary of Theology*, Joseph A. Komonchak, Mary Collins, Dermot A. Lane, eds. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991), 459.



common understanding of heresy is a deviation from the accepted teaching of the Christian faith. This not only ignores the biblical concern over the unity of the church; it also flattens out conversion and discipleship. If heresy only pertains to doctrine, then orthodoxy only involves the mind. The Christian faith is thus reduced to mere propositions to which one must give mental assent, rather than being a dynamic way of living in relationship to God and to one another that is founded upon those truths.

Luke made numerous notes about the fact that in the New Testament, the deciding factor of a person's legitimacy was the fruit of her or his life. An example is found in the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7. The notion of the "broad way" and the "narrow way" is introduced in verses 13 and 14. It is then fortified by three illustrations.

The first is that of the true and the false prophets. Luke writes, "the key issue for discernment is not doctrine (because they may appear in sheep's clothing), but conduct of life—fruit good or bad (here is where the wolf-like character is unmasked)."<sup>3</sup> In addressing the true and false disciples, Luke observes, "what differentiates is whether or not they 'do the will of the Father.' Prophesying, driving out demons, and performing miracles does not get one past the judgment of the last day, where God will disown those who are false." Likewise on the wise and foolish builders, Luke notes, "again what makes the difference is 'whether or not they put the Lord's word into practice.' Does this not involve the whole 'Sermon on the Mount' since it is the last section, the closing appeal of the whole sermon?"

A second test that exists in more than one place in Luke's notes is what he refers to as the test of 1 John. Luke indicates that on the basis of 1 John, we can perceive a three-part test. The first part is theological and requires that the person believe in Jesus. The second is moral and requires that the person live righteously. The third part is social and requires that the person love others as God loves her or him. Consequently, if behavior is at least one of the standards, if not the fundamental criterion for determining a false teacher, we must, among other things, prayerfully contemplate what

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<sup>3</sup> The validity of Luke's observation is supported by the fact that the notion of the "two ways" was a recurring theme in patristic literature. It can be found in the *Didache*, and the *Epistle of Barnabas*. In a way similar to that of Matthew, the *Didache* indicates that among the tests of a prophet is how long he/she stays and whether he/she asks for money (*Didache* 11:6, 9).

the inconsistencies in our lives may indicate about how right we are in our theology. For a long time, we have assumed that being right in our theology is to be on the side of truth. But perhaps being on the side of truth has more to do with being righteous than it does with being right.<sup>4</sup>

If the above is true, how did we find ourselves in this situation where heresy seems to be exclusively an issue of doctrine? Harold Brown notes in his helpful study of heresy that “it was the constant threat and frequent reality of dying for the faith that made doctrine so important to the early church and caused heresy—false doctrine, which cost one’s salvation—to appear so dreadful.”<sup>5</sup> Another contributing factor was the external pressure on the church towards uniformity after Constantine in order that the church might contribute to, rather than detract from, the unity of the Roman Empire.

While this last dimension was certainly an issue leading up to Nicaea, the church sensed the need to define the Christian faith long before Constantine. There is ample evidence for early Christian creeds that exist outside of the canon of Scripture. For example, Irenaeus contains at least two summaries of the Christian faith in the first book of *Against Heresies*, which can be dated to 180 with some certainty.<sup>6</sup> He even refers to the second of these as the *regulam veritas* (rule of truth). Another second-century creed is the *regula fidei* (rule of faith) from Tertullian.<sup>7</sup> We also have from the early third-century the Interrogatory Creed of Hippolytus which was used at baptism. These are all known before 250. As Luke observed, “There is a heritage to be received and handed on.”

Before turning to Luke’s next concern about heresy, I would like to propose a working definition of the term. Luke’s notes contain over a dozen definitions of heresy that he gleaned from various sources. While they

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<sup>4</sup> Before moving on from this discussion of the connection between heresy and church unity, I would like to remind us of what I believe to be the least-proclaimed explanations that Christ offered about one of his own parables. In Matthew 13:36-43 we read Jesus’ explanation about his parable of the wheat and the tares, where the Son of Man charges his angels, not Christ-followers, with separating the weeds from the wheat. In fact, the wheat and weeds seem to be in the same venue until the *eschaton*.

<sup>5</sup> Harold J. Brown, *Heresies: Heresy and Orthodoxy in the History of the Church* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998), 19.

<sup>6</sup> Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, 1.10.1 and 1.22.1.

<sup>7</sup> Tertullian, *Prescription Against Heretics*, 12.

share some similarities that could be synthesized together and each has something to contribute to our understanding, I have decided to let Luke speak for himself. I believe that the following is his own.

*It is my conviction that covenant and community constitute true faith and practice. Heresy, then, is a violation of the covenant and a threat to community life and union. This raises questions then of divergence and discipline. How much dissent from covenant expectations and communal faithfulness can be tolerated before God or his people need to administer discipline?*

I like this definition for several reasons. First, by speaking of covenant and community, Luke does not remove heresy from its connection to doctrine but extends it to the realm of relationships. Second, Luke tethers orthodoxy and orthopraxy together in ways that few other definitions do. Third, Luke reminds us that the issue of heresy is fundamentally related to the biblical concern for Christian unity that we have observed previously.

***Heresy is troublesome because it is a threat to the Church.***

*Secondly, heresy (however defined) has always brought trouble into the church. It destabilizes ministry, turns fellowship into schism, and causes confusion among the faithful. It detracts the church from its more lofty mission and consumes enormous energies as many must put out fires before everything is lost.*

While the experience with the seminary's invitation to Pinnock created in Luke a distaste for the way we tend to use the word, he nevertheless believed that heresy was real. Moreover, his keen grasp of church history made him especially aware of heresy's destructive power. The existence of heresy as a perversion or distortion of orthodoxy may seem self-evident. While this is an operating assumption for most of the church's 2000-year history, this belief was challenged in the last century. The following is a brief excursus into the origins of early Christianity.

In 1934 Walter Bauer published a revolutionary work entitled *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*. In it he argued that early Christianity was more diverse than unified and that it was inaccurate to refer to a single orthodox position before the fourth century. He writes, "perhaps certain manifestations of Christian life that the authors of the

church renounce as ‘heresies’ originally had not been such at all, but, at least here and there, were the only form of the new religion—that is, for those religions they were simply ‘Christianity.’”<sup>8</sup> Bauer then marshals evidence to demonstrate that different geographical areas tended to produce different forms of Christianity.

In the second half of the twentieth century, several scholars began to raise serious objections to Bauer’s thesis. Among the earliest is Henry Turner. In his book, *The Pattern of Christian Truth*, Turner presented a thorough critique of Bauer’s thesis and demonstrated several weaknesses in Bauer’s argument. These include Bauer’s habit of overstating the conclusions suggested by the evidence and his reliance on arguments from silence.<sup>9</sup> These and many other issues have created large holes in Bauer’s thesis.<sup>10</sup> While Bauer’s conclusion about early Christianity is generally understood to be significantly overstated, he was right and should be credited for raising awareness about the diversity that existed within Christianity before Nicaea.

The real danger of Gnosticism was how close it was to some forms of Christianity. This does not mean that significant differences did not exist, however. Perhaps the most important of these is the radical dualism that was intrinsic to most forms of Gnosticism. In most Gnostic cosmologies the material world was understood to be a result of some sense of fall in the demiurge. It logically follows that the material world is evil. Furthermore, salvation meant escaping from the material world or being delivered from it. This contrasts with the Christian understanding that the world was created “good,” despite the fact that it was in need of redemption. Another

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<sup>8</sup> Walter Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*, trans. Paul J. Achtemeier and others (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971), xxii.

<sup>9</sup> H. E. W. Turner, *The Pattern of Christian Truth: A Study in the Relations between Orthodoxy and Heresy in the Early Church* (London: Mowbray, 1954), 46-58.

<sup>10</sup> Among the more recent and interesting criticisms of Bauer’s position is that provided by James McCue. His position is that “the orthodox play a role in Valentinian thought such that they seem to be part of the Valentinian self-understanding.” McCue believes that the way Valentinians used the books of the New Testament is best explained if one understands Valentinianism as arising within a context of second-century proto-orthodoxy. McCue raises another objection to Bauer based upon the self-understanding of the Valentinians. McCue questions whether or not a group like the Valentinians who seemed to understand themselves as the few against the many and who reveled in their exclusiveness could ever rise to be the majority form of Christianity that is required by Bauer’s thesis. James F. McCue, “Orthodoxy and Heresy: Walter Bauer and the Valentinians,” *Vigiliae Christianae* 33 (1979), 120.

dimension of this dualism is the belief in most forms of Gnosticism of a pre-existing and immortal soul. Additionally, there was an elitism or exclusivity to Gnosticism, since only select people knew the secret knowledge that would lead to salvation.

The reason for this brief examination of Bauer's thesis is two-fold. First, if Bauer is correct, there is no "orthodox" or even proto-orthodox Christianity before Nicaea. This means that what is understood as orthodoxy today is only orthodox because the people believing it defeated those who had different ideas. Consequently, the current tendency to avoid the term heresy is justified by history. If on the other hand, it is possible to demonstrate that some *depositum fidei* (deposit of faith) *existed and was carefully handed-down, then we are obligated to address, in some way, deviations from that faith.* Second, and perhaps more significantly, *we ought to be aware of the threat that the early church leaders understood Gnosticism to be, since many educated and thoughtful people believe that Gnosticism was not merely a second-century sect but is alive and well.* In his book, *Omens of the Millennium: The Gnosis of Angels, Dreams, and Resurrection*, the late Yale professor and renowned literary critic Harold Bloom offers what he calls his spiritual autobiography. In explaining why he considers himself a Gnostic, Bloom writes, "our American Religion . . . is more of a gnostic amalgam than a European kind of historical and doctrinal Christianity." To those who would reject his notion, Bloom cites America's fixation with angels, near-death experiences, and astrology as evidence of a prevalent Gnosticism.<sup>11</sup>

***Heresy is troublesome because the Church has, at times, responded to it poorly.***

*In the third place, heresy has often prompted the church to engage in violent responses which tarnish its image as the "bride of Christ." There have been too many incidents where one wonders, What was*

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<sup>11</sup> See Harold Bloom, *Omens of Millennium: The Gnosis of Angels, Dreams, and Resurrection* (New York: Riverhead, 1996), p. 31. See also, Robert A. Segal, ed., *The Allure of Gnosticism: The Gnostic Experience in Jungian Psychology and Contemporary Culture* (Chicago: Open Court, 1995). An interesting argument can also be made that evangelicalism is somewhat Gnostic. To the extent that faith is allowed to be more synonymous with doctrine than trust, it resembles the Gnostic emphasis on secret knowledge that saves.

*the greater evil, the challenge of the errant teaching or the violent reaction of the church against those it considered to be its dangerous enemies?*

*Finally, heresy is a most unwanted topic in the contemporary church. The solution to the troublesome nature of heresy in the minds of many is to banish the term behind a veil of secrecy. It is as if some think that having no words for heresy means it no longer exists. All that remains, then, are differences of belief among Christians; and this condition is to be celebrated as evidence that the church has come to maturity in faith. Of course, one is a little suspicious of this move, since some of its most ardent spokespersons take issue with cardinal doctrines of the faith like the deity of Christ and his resurrection from the dead. It is quite difficult to have serious conversations about heresy when one's partners in the dialogue refuse to acknowledge any such problem exists in the contemporary church. For such people, the only problem is that some Christians are too immature as to bring up the subject of heresy. They are then dismissed by a wave of the hand and labeled with the epithet "fundamentalist."*

The church's responses to heresy can be conceptualized as a spectrum. On one end is the decision to do nothing about heresy. On the other end is the decision to eradicate the heresy by any means necessary. Within these extremes are what Luke asserted were the biblical or appropriate responses to heresy. The spectrum of responses can be understood to look like the following diagram. Luke referred to the grey part of the spectrum as the "scale of discipline."

The idea communicated by the spectrum is that in order for discipline to be appropriate it must be in proportion to the degree of divergence. It is important to note that even with the most severe form of discipline within the grey area, the purpose is for correction and restoration and does no physical harm to the person.<sup>12</sup> Additionally it should be remembered that these are responses to heresy that are dividing the church and accompanied by unchristian behavior, not responses to people who have different ways of understanding the faith. As Paul indicates in writing to the Philippians,

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<sup>12</sup> See 1 Cor. 5:5, and 1 Tim. 1:20.

“Let those of us then who are mature be of the same mind; and if you think differently about anything, this too God will reveal to you” (Phil. 3:15). I will return to the subject of appropriate responses to heresy later.

It is necessary to make some observations about the extreme ends of the spectrum. Addressing this is important for two reasons. First, they were among the reasons Luke offered for the troublesomeness of the term heresy. Second, I am convinced that while they are inappropriate responses, they are the two most common responses to heresy today.

The response that heresy must be eradicated is an overreaction to it. It is important for us to acknowledge that throughout history, some of the church’s least Christ-like moments have been connected to an overreaction to heresy. This overreaction can be manifested in several ways. The mildest form is the church’s tendency to overuse the term. The existence of seemingly irreconcilable opinions does not necessarily mean that either one is heresy. Peter Rollins, who is at the forefront of the Radical Theology movement has offered a caution about the Christian “tendency to judge those who are ‘other’ than ourselves, deciding whether they are right or wrong by simply comparing their views to our own and seeing how similar they are.”<sup>13</sup>

In other words, the moniker of heresy is one that we use too quickly in an attempt to control positions that are different from our own. Where two positions exist that appear to be mutually exclusive, one does not have to be wrong and the other right. Both may be wrong or partially wrong. But let us suppose for the sake of argument that one view is correct and the other is not. Even in this instance, heresy may not be an appropriate label. Augustine, for example, made an interesting distinction between error and heresy.<sup>14</sup> He understood that the word heresy involved choice. This means that if a person held an unorthodox position because it was what they were taught by their parents or some authority, the person would be wrong but not guilty of heresy. I also believe in light of the previous examination of the term heresy in the New Testament, it is possible to argue that if a wrong belief did not cause division in the church, it would not technically rise to the level of heresy.

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<sup>13</sup> Peter Rollins, *The Idolatry of God: Breaking Our Addiction to Certainty and Satisfaction* (New York: Howard Books, 2013), 149.

<sup>14</sup> Augustine, Letter 43 1:1.

This type of overreaction to heresy was Luke's concern with the suspicion that was created regarding the seminary's evangelical commitment as a result of its invitation to Clark Pinnock. The issue for Luke was not that Open Theism was correct and needed to be defended. Rather, it was the nearly automatic tendency to label ideas that stretch us or are different from our own as heretical. Again, this is only one way of overreacting.

Another manifestation and the most radical form of this overreaction is violence, whether in the form of character assassination, coercive control, or actual physical injury and death.<sup>15</sup> It is not necessary to rehearse the church's history of the crusades, the papal inquisition, or the Salem witch trials in order to make this point, and while these examples are certainly beyond justification, they were at least focused on those who could be viewed, rightly or wrongly, as "enemies" of the Christian faith. We must, therefore, also remember events like the Thirty Years War and the persecution of Anabaptists, during which Christians were killing other Christians in the name of the Lord.

The defense of orthodoxy has not been the sole cause of the problems just enumerated, however. Instead, it is the passion to defend orthodoxy combined with the power of the state. Alister McGrath refers to this as the "politicization of orthodoxy."<sup>16</sup> Luke observed, "The early church stood against heretics on the basis of doctrine and life, but it did not kill them." Elsewhere, he noted that "state power makes punishment worse," and after Constantine "church discipline gives way to civil punishment." This is exemplified by Augustine, when in reference to Donatists he writes, "The unity of Christ is rent asunder, the heritage of Christ is reproached, the baptism of Christ is treated with contempt; and they refuse to have these errors corrected by constituted human authorities, applying penalties of a temporal kind in order to prevent them from being doomed to eternal punishment for such sacrilege."<sup>17</sup> In light of these atrocities, it may be

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<sup>15</sup> At the risk of oversimplifying the situation, it seems like the greatest temptation for modern-minded Christians is to overreact to heresy, while the greatest temptation of postmoderns is to underreact to it.

<sup>16</sup> Alister McGrath, *Heresy: A History of Defending the Truth* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2009), 222.

<sup>17</sup> Augustine, Letter 43.



tempting to conclude that the church should avoid labeling heresy and administering church discipline in response to it. But Luke asks, “Must the church make no decisions regarding heresy simply because past power-crazed churches acted like governments?”

As indicated above, the other end of the spectrum is the tendency to ignore heresy or act like it does not exist. This could be understood as an underreaction to heresy, and it is also an inappropriate response. I am confident that while Luke understood the overreaction to heresy as a serious problem due to its propensity to justify violence, he perceived the underreaction to heresy as a greater problem because of its current prevalence.

By insisting that heresy be addressed, this does not mean that everyone must conform to a narrow sense of the Christian faith. In reality, there is ample room for diversity, but there must also be enough in common about being Christ followers that would distinguish us from other groups, religious or otherwise. This has been understood throughout the history of the church. For example, Origen’s *On First Principles* is the earliest known philosophical treatment of Christian doctrine. Yet, in his preface to it, Origen is careful to communicate that it is an expression of his theological exploration and speculation and not necessarily his understanding of dogma. He states, “the reader must carefully consider and work out for himself; for we must not be supposed to put these forward as settled doctrines, but as subjects for inquiry and discussion.”<sup>18</sup> During the Reformation, Luther’s colleague Philip Melancthon borrowed from Stoic philosophy and applied the idea of *adiaphora*, or “things indifferent” to doctrinal disputes in an effort to promote unity in the church. In the same vein, one of John Wesley’s most frequently quoted statements is this: “But as to all opinions that do not strike at the root of Christianity, we think and let think.”<sup>19</sup> In other words, while there is plenty of room for exploration and opinion, there must be agreement about the core of the Christian faith. As Harold Brown observes, “A certain level of disagreement is compatible with Christianity, and indeed has always existed, but beyond a certain point of disagreement, one can no longer speak of a community of faith.”<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Origen, *De Princ.* II.8.4.

<sup>19</sup> John Wesley, *The Character of Methodists*, 1.

<sup>20</sup> Brown, *Heresies*, 22.

While a debate over what constitutes the core or non-negotiables of the faith will naturally occur, an examination of the parameters of the debate is beyond the scope of this study. The only comment I would offer is the wisdom in limiting our understanding of the “root of Christianity” to what has been preserved in Scripture and expounded upon in the ancient creeds. Dorothy Sayers addressed a similar situation several decades ago when she wrote, “What is urgently necessary is that certain fundamentals should be restated in terms that make their meaning—and indeed the mere fact that they have meaning—clear.”<sup>21</sup>

### **Guidelines for making heresy less troublesome**

So, how ought we to address heresy? How do we go about implementing Luke’s scale of discipline? This study has led to several principles that should be prayerfully used when dealing with heresy. While presented in a list form, the following has been gleaned from Luke’s notes and cobbled together here.

The first principle is to have the right disposition. This ought to be achieved before the term heresy is even employed. Luke reminds us that “condemnations do not stop every wrong idea.” In fact, I would argue that the more individualistic a culture becomes the less effect condemnations will have. For instance, most of us have experienced some form of the radical self-stylized faith that is pervasive today. Luke Timothy Johnson addresses this in his book *The Creed*, where he notes, “Some sleepwalk through the words they memorized as children, bothered not at all by the outrageous ideas to which they are declaring their commitment.”<sup>22</sup> Even more troubling than this apathy is the antipathy that he describes in people who are aware of the radical claims of the Creed but “deal with the scandal by freelance editing, passing over in silence or altering the statements” with which they disagree.<sup>23</sup> The declaration that a particular idea is heretical is wasted energy where covenant and community do not constitute the basis of Christian identity and fidelity.

Furthermore, Luke advises that before something can be declared as heresy, there needs to be “wide Christian council and agreement.” This means

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<sup>21</sup> Dorothy Sayers, *Creed or Chaos?* (Manchester, NH: Sophia Institute Press, 1995), 57-58.

<sup>22</sup> Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Creed* (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 6.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

that no one person, or side of an issue (Calvinist/Arminian, Protestant/Catholic, etc.), can legitimately define heresy for the entire church. Luke also observed that “there is room for learning by experience over time.” For this reason, the church should “take time” when determining heresy. Luke remarked that “many were first called heretics who later were honored for their pioneering work.” Among these are Wycliffe, Hus, and Luther. Related to his advice to take time, Luke cautioned that “hasty judgments, especially if there are self-interests involved, cloud judgment regarding who is heretical.” Therefore, we ought to be critically aware of our own motives. Lastly, Luke believed that “communication requires language that invites discussion rather than closes it.” It is always profitable to keep talking, especially if restoration is the ultimate goal for any discipline the suspected heresy may warrant.

The second principle is to have a correct and robust understanding of what the term heresy means. Yes, heresy means a deviation from the faith that has been handed down to us, but it also ought to include a sense of choice or intentionality. If it is heresy, it should be threatening the unity of the church, and we could rightly expect it to be accompanied by unchristian behavior.

A thin or one-dimensional understanding of the term is quite dangerous today. This is because of the relationship between truth and reality. Modern-thinking people have a very difficult time getting their minds around the notion that something could be true but not real. Postmoderns not only have no problem making the distinction; they are largely uninterested in the intellectual concept of truth. Luke was aware of this dynamic when he wrote, “People are not asking, ‘Is the Bible true?’ People are asking, ‘Is there any *good news* in that Book?’” In light of this situation, we could expect that a church that is spending its energy defending the truthfulness of its position(s) will be generally ignored by people who believe that truth is an irrelevant category and who are instead seeking what is real.

The third principle is to renounce coercive force. Not only does the refusal to use coercion most resemble the ethic of Christ and the kingdom of God; it is an effective means of reaching postmoderns. As Alister McGrath

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<sup>38</sup> Cullen, “Sikalongo Mission Report 1932,” *Handbook of Missions*, 1932, 22.

<sup>39</sup> David B. Hall, “Sikalongo Mission,” *Evangelical Visitor*, March 27, 1933, 13; “Sikalongo Report 1933,” *Handbook of Missions*, 1934, 70-71.

has observed, “Orthodoxy, in a postmodern reading of things, is not about the merited triumph of ideas that were clearly superior to their rivals. It is about the imposition of such ideas by those in power . . . in order to preserve the status quo.”<sup>24</sup> If McGrath is right, as I suspect he is, what better way to communicate the reality of orthodoxy than to renounce coercion?

Additionally, coercive force ought to be rejected by the church because its use actually means we are weak. The readiness to employ force for one’s faith seems to be more common among the extreme fundamentalists of groups, whether we are talking about Westboro Baptist Church members, Islamic jihadists, or militant environmentalists<sup>25</sup> Obviously, there are differences, but in each of these some form of force is being used to make those on the outside of the group see that those within the group are right. On the surface, the tenacity, and at times the ferocity, of these groups can give the impression of a strong conviction, but I believe the opposite is actually true. Strong faith is able to exist with disagreement and difference. A strong marriage is not one where both members agree on every decision; it is one where both members are committed to the other even when they do not see eye to eye. Strong faith does not need force. It is its own compelling argument.

The fourth principle is to boldly proclaim the reality of the kingdom of God. Luke asks, “Cannot a church, which has renounced the power to coerce, still persuasively argue that Christ’s resurrection makes all the difference in life?” We all want to say that it can, but how do we go about this? The temptation may be to merely reassert our belief that the Christian faith is true. While it is an approach that has had a long history, I am not sure that it will persuade people who are not interested in truth, if what is meant by truth is only propositional statements.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> McGrath, *Heresy*, 217-218.

<sup>25</sup> Admittedly, issues of injustice, whether only perceived or real, make my point about violence less precise than I wish, but I believe that my basic principle remains.

<sup>26</sup> In raising the distinction between truth and reality, I am not arguing that truth has nothing to do with reality. In fact, I believe that the shalom that God wills for his creation means that there is no difference between truth and reality. The problem is that we live in a culture where many people are uninterested in truth-claims.

### A new way forward

Alister McGrath envisions an approach to the subject of orthodoxy and heresy that is different from what has typically been pursued by the church. I believe this resonates with what Luke had in mind. McGrath writes:

. . . the real challenge faced by the churches cannot be neutralized by the demonstration that theological orthodoxy is both necessary and appropriate for the well-being of Christian communities. Can orthodoxy once more be sprinkled with stardust? If Christianity is to regain the imaginative ascendancy, it must rediscover what G. K. Chesterton . . . termed “the romance of orthodoxy.” It is not sufficient to show that orthodoxy represents the most intellectually and spiritually authentic form of the Christian faith or that it has been tried and tested against its intellectual alternatives. The problem lies deeper, at the level of the imagination and feelings. If Christ is indeed the “Lord of the Imagination,” the distinction between orthodoxy and heresy ought to have significant imaginative implications. The real challenge is for the churches to demonstrate that orthodoxy is imaginatively compelling, emotionally engaging, aesthetically enhancing, and personally liberating.<sup>27</sup>

Some of the foundation for the task to which McGrath is calling the Church has been laid decades ago in the work of my favorite theologian, Hans Urs von Balthasar. Although he is only now being discovered in Protestant circles, von Balthasar was one of the most influential theologians of the last century, both inside and outside of the Roman Catholic Church. There are several ways in which it is ironic to be concluding this study with a glimpse at the work of my favorite theologian. First, despite being elected to become a cardinal (he died before the ceremony), von Balthasar, like Pinnock, had been accused by some of promulgating heresy.<sup>28</sup> Second, he is among those mentioned earlier who was convinced that Gnosticism did not die in the early centuries of the Church but was very much alive and must be combatted. In fact, he viewed “many modern theological trends as

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<sup>27</sup> McGrath, *Heresy*, 232-233.

<sup>28</sup> See Alyssa Lyra Pitstick, *Light in Darkness: Hans Urs von Balthasar and the Catholic Doctrine of Christ's Descent into Hell* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2007).

variations of second-century Gnostic doctrines.”<sup>29</sup> Von Balthasar has much to add to these reflections on heresy, faith, and truthful living.

Von Balthasar’s major work was composed in three sections with each section containing multiple volumes. The first is his theological aesthetics, which he entitled, *The Glory of the Lord*; the second is his theodramatics, where he addresses action (morality); and the last is his theo-logic, which is his philosophical treatment of truth.

A fundamental concept for understanding von Balthasar is his term “transcendentals.” Aidan Nichols provides a helpful summary of this key concept in von Balthasar’s thought. The idea is that “every existing thing, sheerly by virtue of its existence, shares in being and in the so-called ‘transcendental’ qualities of being: unity, truth, goodness, and beauty.”<sup>30</sup> It is important to understand von Balthasar’s conviction that these cannot be separated from one another.<sup>31</sup>

With this awareness, we turn to von Balthasar, who writes:

Our situation today shows that beauty demands for itself at least as much courage and decision as do truth and goodness, and she will not allow herself to be separated and banned from her two sisters without taking them along with herself in an act of mysterious vengeance. We can be sure that whoever sneers at her name as if she were the ornament of a bourgeois past—whether he admits it or not—can no longer pray and soon will no longer be able to love.<sup>32</sup>

Later in the same passage he states:

In a world without beauty . . . the good also loses its attractiveness, the self-evidence of why it must be carried out . . . in a world that no longer has enough confidence in itself to affirm the beautiful, the proofs of the truth have lost their cogency. In other words, syllogisms may still dutifully clatter away like rotary presses or computers which infallibly spew out an exact number of answers

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<sup>29</sup> Kevin Mongrain, *The Systematic Thought of Hans Urs von Balthasar* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 2002), 133.

<sup>30</sup> Aidan Nichols, *A Key to Balthasar: Hans Urs von Balthasar on Beauty, Goodness, and Truth* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), p. 6.

<sup>31</sup> It is analogous to the fruit of the Spirit, which is a singular fruit composed of several qualities.

<sup>32</sup> Von Balthasar, *Seeing*, p. 18.

by the minute. But the logic of these answers is itself a mechanism which no longer captivates anyone.<sup>33</sup>

It is interesting to me how many of the earlier themes of this study return in this passage from von Balthasar's work. For example, the transcendental of truth must not be divorced from goodness, and together they exist alongside unity. All but one of these have been mentioned previously in this document. The new concept here is obviously beauty. But what does von Balthasar mean by beauty?

In its purest and most succinct form, beauty is the divine self-revelation of God's love. Von Balthasar explains, "'The beauty of God' in the 'beauty of Jesus Christ' appears therefore precisely in the crucified, but the crucified, precisely as such, is the one risen: in this self-disclosure, God's beauty embraces death as well as life, fear as well as joy, that which we would call ugly, as well as that which we would call beautiful." It is the "reception, perceived through the eyes of faith, of the self-interpreting glory of the sovereignly free love of God."<sup>34</sup> Elsewhere, he describes this love as "not wanting to be for oneself."<sup>35</sup> He begins his work with aesthetics because he is convinced that seeing this beauty, grasping this love has a gravitational pull. This is why von Balthasar believes that this "love alone is credible" in our day.

Given that the concepts of orthodoxy and heresy have been largely restricted to correct or incorrect understandings of doctrine, this trajectory will naturally seem like an abandoning of objective Christian truth. But attending to aesthetics is not a refutation of truth but a pondering of a different set of questions. As Alejandro Garcia-Rivera indicates, the consideration of beauty as it relates to faith addresses the question, "What moves the human heart?"<sup>36</sup>

It is true that following the path suggested by von Balthasar may mean that the demarcation lines that the church has historically enjoyed drawing, regarding who is "in" and who is "out," who is right and who is wrong, may be less clear. Perhaps this is not a negative development, however. It may

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<sup>33</sup> Von Balthasar, *Seeing*, p. 19.

<sup>34</sup> Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Love Alone Is Credible* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), 11.

<sup>35</sup> Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Credo* (New York: Crossroad, 1990), 59.

<sup>36</sup> Alejandro Garcia-Rivera, *The Community of the Beautiful: A Theological Aesthetics* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999), 9.

actually reflect the complexity of life. Von Balthasar gives an example of this when he writes,

Indeed, must we not simultaneously intensify both aspects: the less the Church is identical with [the] world and the more it is itself, the more open and vulnerable it is to the world and the less it can be marked off from it. Can such a paradox be thought, let alone lived? It must.<sup>37</sup>

Von Balthasar's attention to theological aesthetics relates to this study in another way. The transcendentals (goodness, truth, unity, beauty) connect directly to Luke's four reasons for the troublesomeness of the word heresy. The church's overuse of the word and history of violence concerning heresy is a failure of goodness. Acting as if heresy does not exist is a failure of truth. Neglecting to understand the threat of heresy is a failure to preserve the unity intended by God. Lastly, functioning with a one-dimensional view of truth, orthodoxy, and heresy that includes neither a sense of passion nor morality is a failure to express the beauty of the Christian faith.

In a day when truth is viewed as irrelevant, could von Balthasar have been on to something with his emphasis on beauty? If von Balthasar is right, could it be that the next and actually the proper battleground for orthodoxy is fundamentally in our hearts rather than solely in our minds? To those who are suspicious of this approach, I pose two questions: 1) Are we not observing the perceived irrelevance of the Christian faith that is at least partially a result of our emphasis on truth as reality in a culture that makes a distinction between the two? 2) How can the self-disinterested love of the Trinity, expressed most precisely on the cross, and given witness in the Body of Christ, not be sufficient evidence of both the truth and the reality of the Christian faith? I believe Chesterton answered this question when he wrote, "The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting. It has been found difficult; and left untried."<sup>38</sup>

The words in italics are taken from the notes of Luke's research on heresy. While I have included several lengthy passages, I decided that it is important to allow Luke to speak for himself as much as possible.

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<sup>37</sup> Von Balthasar, *Truth*, 91.

<sup>38</sup> G. K. Chesterton, *What's Wrong With the World?* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1994), p. 48.



## A History of Sikalongo Mission

### Part 3: Indigenization and Independence at Sikalongo, 1947-1978<sup>1</sup>

By Dwight W. Thomas\*

#### Introduction

The end of World War II brought significant changes around the world. The effects reverberated in Northern Rhodesia as well. At Sikalongo, things seemingly continued much as they had before; but even this remote outpost of Brethren in Christ missions was influenced by the war's consequences.

The missionary experiences of the Cullens, Manns, Hersheys, and Anna Eyster were imbued with the spirit of the colonial era and informed by colonial sentiments. Although they sought to serve the local people and build the church, their perspectives were undeniably colonialistic. After all, these missionaries came to Africa prior to the outbreak of World War II when the authority of the British government and the white missionary were still mostly unquestioned. By contrast, those who came to Sikalongo after 1947 found a political environment in which white authority was under siege, independence was in the air, and the pressure to indigenize was growing. Moreover, nearly all of the new missionaries were born after 1920, had little African experience, and naturally bought the new missiological thinking of their generation.

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<sup>1</sup> I want to acknowledge the many people who contributed significant advice and information about this period of Sikalongo's history: Daniel Munombwe, Chief Singani, William Siayula, Jacob Muchimba, Dennis Mweetwa, Stephen Muleya, Ethel Brubaker, George Kibler, Keith and Lucy Ulery, Edith Miller, and Dave Brubaker. I also wish to thank Beth Hostetler Mark for her editorial help and for scanning African executive committee and board minutes, which have been invaluable.

Changes in Brethren in Christ mission leadership in Africa occurred at the same time as the shift in missionary demographics. Longtime superintendent, Henry H. Brubaker, was on the verge of retirement. He had supervised African mission work for two decades, taking over after the death of Bishop Henry Steigerwald in December 1928.<sup>2</sup> Like Steigerwald, Henry Brubaker's worldview was decidedly colonial. The 1950 appointment of a considerably-younger man, Arthur Climenhaga, as mission superintendent signaled an overall shift in mission outlook.<sup>3</sup> Climenhaga's educational background and missiological orientation influenced the direction of African mission work. In North America, the Foreign Mission Board underwent changes as well. In 1948, Graybill Wolgemuth became secretary of the Foreign Mission Board (FMB) with Henry N. Hostetter as assistant secretary; and in 1949, Wolgemuth assumed the chair of the FMB and Hostetter became "Executive Secretary." Both men traveled to Africa to assess the situation in 1948, and the two men had an increasingly important role in mission policy.<sup>4</sup> These North American leadership changes had a profound impact on the work in Northern and Southern Rhodesia. As a result of changing political winds, a new generation of missionaries and shifts in the FMB, the years leading up to Zambian independence in 1964 were years of adjustment and change. Indigenizing the church became a high priority and preparing for independence became an unavoidable reality.

### **Adjusting to Changing Currents: 1947-54**

#### *The David and Dorcas Climenhaga years (1947-1953)*

David and Dorcas Climenhaga came to Sikalongo in January 1947 to relieve Dorothy and Elwood Hershey. The Climenhagas left in January

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<sup>2</sup> For an account of Steigerwald's life and death, see S. B. Stoner, "The Life and Death of Bishop Steigerwald," *Evangelical Visitor*, January 7, 1929, 12-13.

<sup>3</sup> Henry N. Hostetter, "Foreign Mission Board Report," in *Handbook of Missions Home and Foreign of the Brethren in Christ Church - 1951* (n.p., 1951), 8-10. Note: There are slight variations in wording of the title over the years, but *Handbook of Missions* will be used for all.

<sup>4</sup> See "Missions Deputation," *Evangelical Visitor*, May 3, 1948, 2.; Graybill Wolgemuth and Henry N. Hostetter, "Report of Delegation Visit to Africa and India," in *Handbook of Missions*, 1949, 15-34.

1954, having served for seven years.<sup>5</sup> Anna Eyster remained at Sikalongo in her role as head mistress, but left in August 1948 and was replaced by Anna Graybill. Rhoda Lenhert served as the nurse in charge at the clinic. Donna, the Climenhaga's first child, was also a member of the American missionary team. The African staff included longtime workers, Peter Munsaka, Arthur Kutuywayo and Steleki Mudenda, and other capable educators such as Jonathan and Stephen Muleya.



*Sikalongo Mission staff in 1948. Left to right: Anna Graybill, Rhoda Lenhert, David and Dorcas Climenhaga with Denise. Photo courtesy of Brethren in Christ Historical Library and Archives.*

David and Dorcas met while studying at Beulah College in Upland, California (later called Upland College).<sup>6</sup> David was born in the United States to missionaries John and Emma Climenhaga, traveling as a young child with them to Africa where they served at Matopo Mission. Like their parents, both he and his older brother, Arthur, gave significant service as Brethren in Christ

missionaries in Africa. Dorcas was born in Martinsburg, Pennsylvania to David and Cora Slagenweit. After their marriage in October 1942, the Climenhagas served at Waukena Brethren in Christ Church. David also taught in the local public school. Ordained by the California church, they went to Africa in 1946.<sup>7</sup>

When Climenhagas arrived in 1947, Sikalongo was already a well-established mission station with a healthy church, a respected school, and

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<sup>5</sup> David Climenhaga and Dorcas Climenhaga, "David and Dorcas Climenhaga," in *My Story, My Song: Life Stories by Brethren in Christ Missionaries*, ed. E. Morris Sider ([Mount Joy, Pa.]: Brethren in Christ World Missions, 1989), 209-22.

<sup>6</sup> For a more detail account of David and Dorcas Climenhaga's early lives, see Donna F. Wenger, "God's Way Is The Best Way," *Brethren in Christ History and Life* 33, no 3 (December 2010), 456-540. See also: E. Morris Sider, *Messiah College: A History* (Nappanee, Ind.: Evangel Press, 1984).; *Ibid.*, *A Vision for Service: A History of Upland College* (Nappanee, IN: Evangel Press, 1976).

<sup>7</sup> Anna R. Engle, John A. Climenhaga, and Leoda A. Buckwalter, *There Is No Difference: God Works in Africa and India* (Nappanee, IN: E.V. Publishing, 1950). David Climenhaga and Dorcas Climenhaga.

an upgraded clinic. Peter Munsaka was in his second term as the deacon, and the church was active and well-attended. Anna Eyster had worked tirelessly to improve the educational quality at Sikalongo Boys School during the previous two decades. Additionally, the Hersheys had increased the number of outschools under Sikalongo supervision.

Although much of the work at Sikalongo Mission continued as before, the Climenhagas energetically began to make their own contributions. David Climenhaga's 1948 report, for example, mentions the continuing work of local evangelist, Samuel Munda. Munda was apparently one of the first students at Wanezi Bible School. The 1948 report also highlighted the evangelistic visits of Kalaluka, Mizinga, Mafulo, and Jamu.<sup>8</sup> Active evangelism and ongoing church ministry resulted in 51 baptisms at Sikalongo Mission in 1951.<sup>9</sup>

Similarly, educational work moved ahead. The student body at Sikalongo increased steadily, while the number of outstations and teachers fluctuated between 12-15 schools and 15-17 teachers. Sampson Mwaanga, long one of the anchors in the boys' school, left Sikalongo and moved to Livingstone. Anna Graybill was transferred and Anna Kettering subsequently assumed the role of headmistress for Sikalongo, with Jonathan Muleya and Stephen Muleya taking important supporting roles. Kettering remained in the role for six years, providing a period of relative stability for the school. David Climenhaga's educational presence is still remembered fondly at Sikalongo. Sikalongo students gave him the nickname, Hampolombo. Isaiah Muleya, a long time Sikalongo resident and son of Peter Munsaka, claimed that the nickname referred to the imposing way David walked.<sup>10</sup>

By 1948, the teaching staff at Sikalongo Mission was largely African. It included longtime teachers, Arthur Kutywayo and David Muleya, as well as Joseph Moono who eventually became the headmaster at Sikalongo Boys School.

In other educational developments, Climenhaga continued to supervise the remote outschools and Sikalongo's "Primary School" (formerly called

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<sup>8</sup> David E. Climenhaga, "Sikalongo Mission General Report, 1948," in *Handbook of Missions*, 1949, 57.

<sup>9</sup> "Sikalongo Mission Station General Report, 1951," in *Handbook of Missions*, 1952, 103ff.

<sup>10</sup> Isaiah Muleya, interviews with Dwight W. Thomas; David E. Climenhaga, Facebook communications with the author, August 17, 2016. Hereafter, all cited interviews are with the author.



*1948 African teaching staff. From left to right: Joseph Moono, Moses Munsaka, David Muleya, Bothwell Kanyanya, Nathan Munsaka (builder), and Arthur Kutuyayo. Photo courtesy of Anna Eyster Photograph Collection.*

“Sikalongo Day School”), which had relocated on the hill north of the Sikalongo Dam. Climenhaga made regular visits to Brethren in Christ primary schools to monitor the performance of the teachers, talk with local people and check on the results of the students. Brethren in Christ outschools which were part of the Sikalongo District included: Mboole, Siazwela, Mutukula, Myonzo, Singani, Masopo, Nakeempa, Bbombo and Siamvula. The histories of these various schools have yet to be written, but names of some of the teachers appear occasionally in the written record: William Mudenda, John Siantete, Josiah Chela and Paul Mudenda.

### **Sikalongo Clinic**

Various medical staff, along with the Climenhagas, continued to encourage and improve Sikalongo Clinic. Hersheys had made strides to improve the clinic, but more needed to be done to meet the growing demand for health treatment. The 1948 Handbook of Missions noted that the clinic gave more than 14,000 treatments in 1947 while Rhoda Lenhert was the

nurse in charge.<sup>11</sup> The Executive Board approved new clinic buildings to meet the need.<sup>12</sup> More patients required expanded facilities so a new 12-bed building was built.<sup>13</sup> On the recommendation of the Provincial Medical Officer, the mission purchased a microscope for Sikalongo Clinic with half the cost coming from the government and the other half from mission funds.<sup>14</sup> Climenhaga also supervised the building of a nurse's house near the clinic.<sup>15</sup>



*Sikalongo Clinic, 1950. Photo courtesy of Evangelical Visitor, August 8, 1950.*

General improvements at the mission included a new water system with large brick tanks and a substantial pump.<sup>16</sup> In 1952, Sikalongo Mission burned 80,000 bricks in order to build new buildings and repair older ones. Some bricks were used for a new two-ward building at the clinic and some

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<sup>11</sup> David E. Climenhaga, "Sikalongo Mission General Report, 1948," in *Handbook of Missions*, 1949, 57.

<sup>12</sup> Edna E. Lehman, "On the Foreign Field," *Evangelical Visitor*, August 7, 1950, 11.

<sup>13</sup> "Days Following the Smoke and Fire," *Evangelical Visitor*, April 2, 1951, 11.

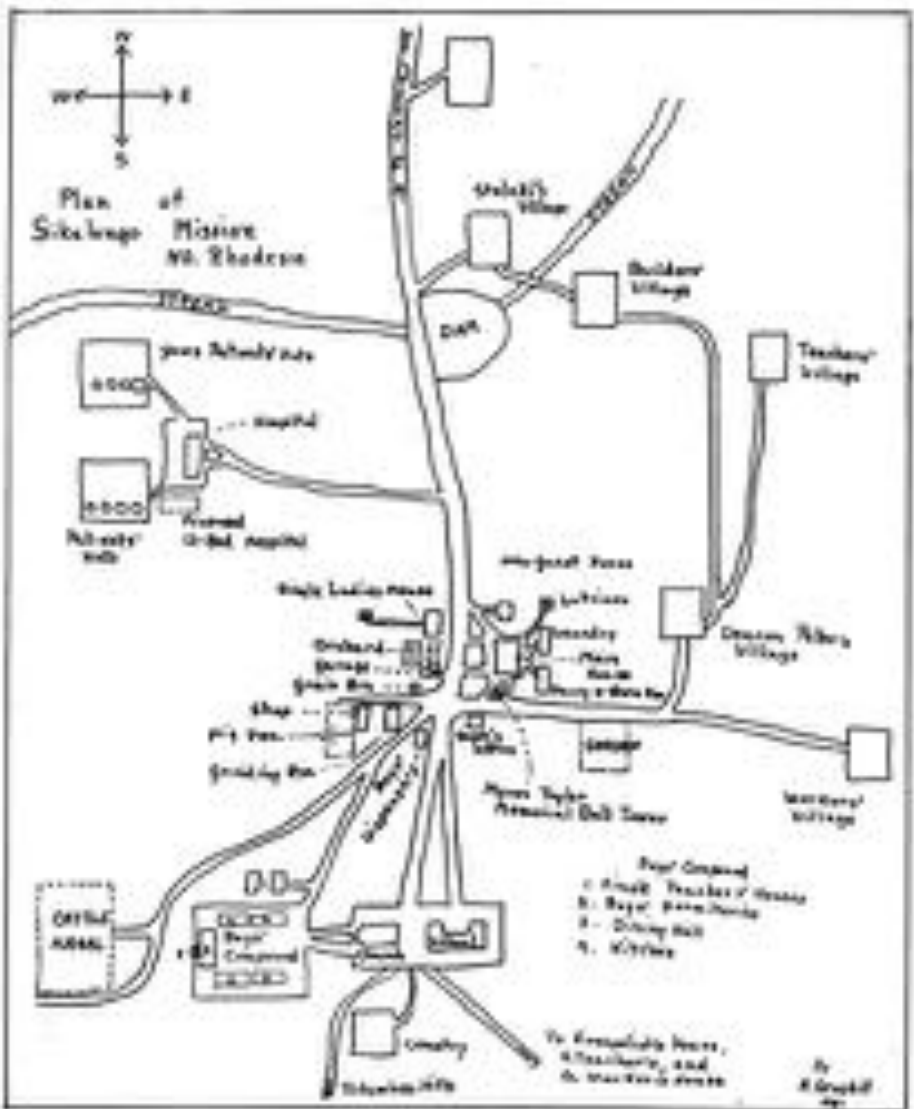
<sup>14</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, Brethren in Christ Missions in Africa, Item 6, November 7, 1951. Hereafter, all citations to minutes, unless otherwise indicated, will be to Brethren in Christ Missions in Africa minutes.

<sup>15</sup> David E. Climenhaga, "Sikalongo Mission, General Report, 1952," in *Handbook of Missions*, 1953, 44.

<sup>16</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, Brethren in Christ Church in Africa, Article 40, January 1, 1947.

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for the small “Guest Cottage” north of the main house.<sup>17</sup> Anna Graybill drew a map of Sikalongo Mission in 1951 which gives a good indication of the place at that time.



Map of Sikalongo Mission by Anna Graybill, 1951.

<sup>17</sup> Minutes of Building Committee, January 1, 1949. See also Henry H. Brubaker, “Africa General Report, 1949,” in *Handbook of Missions*, 1950, 68.

A variety of other noteworthy activities occupied people at Sikalongo Mission. In the area of music, David Climenhaga helped compile a new edition of the Tonga hymnal and, in 1953, the African conference decided to approve the use of musical instruments in worship.<sup>18</sup> This decision clearly did not include traditional African drums. The North American church at that time disapproved of drums as well, and the ongoing tension between traditional North American Brethren in Christ understandings and African culture surfaced periodically. One such instance occurred in 1949. In the June issue of the *Evangelical Visitor*, Climenhaga wrote disparagingly about the African use of drums in an article entitled “Prayer, Praise and Drums.”<sup>19</sup> Interestingly, Arthur Morris Jones, an Anglican missionary at Mapanza (not far from Macha) at this same moment in time was researching and analyzing traditional Tonga music and drumming. One of his best-known publications examined the intricacies of traditional African drum rhythms.<sup>20</sup> Both Dorcas and David Climenhaga were intelligent, well-informed, musically-astute, and well-meaning. The comparison is not meant to tarnish Climenhaga’s legacy but merely to highlight the difficulty of discerning the difference between principled biblical practice and local cultural norms.

### Unsung Heroes and Heroines

Histories often overlook the contribution of certain groups of people. Three categories of unsung heroes and heroines deserve recognition for their contribution to Sikalongo Mission: African support staff, missionary women, and children.

#### *African support staff*

From the earliest days at Sikalongo, a variety of local people assisted missionaries in their work. Several have already been mentioned: Peter Munsaka, Jesse Chikaile, Arthur Kutwayo, and Jonathan Muleya. Others were not as prominent so they received little or no mention in reports. Although support staff played auxiliary roles, their contributions were

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<sup>18</sup> Minutes of African Conference, Item 39, August 8, 1953.

<sup>19</sup> David E. Climenhaga, “Prayer, Praise and Drums,” *Evangelical Visitor*, June 27, 1949, 7.

<sup>20</sup> Adda E. Taylor, “Sikalongo,” *Evangelical Visitor*, February 2, 1931, 46.



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critical. Davidson Mukonka (also called Manchisi), was a stalwart church member at Sikalongo for many decades. He did evangelistic work, taught in rural schools, served as the deacon at Sikalongo Church, and later filled the role of evangelist at the clinic. His daughter-in-law and grandson (Lenford Muchindu) are faithful members of the congregation today. Women, such as Bina Beulah (wife of Jesse Chikaile) and Bina David (wife of Peter Munsaka), supported their husbands by tending to village responsibilities, caring for their children, and assisting missionary women in advising and organizing other women in the church. Workers such as Ticki and Tound are remembered for their help in mission gardens and their care for mission animals. Some workers came and went, of course, but some helped at the mission station for many decades.

Steleki Mudenda was one of those loyal workers whose name surfaces periodically in the written record but who receives little attention. He grew up at Sikalongo, living near the mission. He apparently moved away from Sikalongo for a period of time, but he was back at Sikalongo in 1931. He



*Photos including Steleki Mudenda from the Anna Eyster Photograph Collection.*

was important enough at that time to be among the six men chosen to carry Myron Taylor's coffin.<sup>21</sup> Until his death in the 1990s, he lived just north of the mission dam. His village is labeled on Anna Graybill's 1951 map (see above). Adda Taylor referred to him as one of the "herd boys" in 1931.<sup>22</sup> However, in the mid-1930s, Sikalongo Boys School photographs show Mudenda seated with Arthur Kutwayo and David Muleya in school pictures, indicating his status as regular staff member. Anna Eyster included several photographs of Steleki Mudenda in her photo album.

Mudenda's responsibilities at Sikalongo Mission included cooking for the students and helping to supervise them. Although the 1931 account refers to him as a herd boy, he is later called "the Father of the boys," implying that he was well-loved by the student body.<sup>23</sup> Sikalongo residents still remember him as one of the key workers at Sikalongo mission.<sup>24</sup>

### *Missionary women*

Missionary women frequently receive little attention because they were not often official leaders, but their contribution should not be underestimated. Because single women had no children or grandchildren to write about them, their stories largely remain untold. But, married or single, the role of women at Sikalongo Mission must not be overlooked. Some missionary women worked primarily in education, others in health ministry, and some in supportive roles to enable their husbands to do other work. A partial list of the women who worked at Sikalongo would include: Adda Engle Taylor, Beulah Musser, Elizabeth Engle, Anna Engle, Anna Eyster, Janie Cullen, Annie Winger, Esther Mann, Dorothy Hershey, Anna Graybill, Rhoda Lenhert, Anna Kettering, Edna Lehman, Blanche Kipe, Gladys I. Lehman, Kathryn Hossler, Mary E. Heisey, Martha Lady, Fannie Longenecker, Ann McCuen, Grace Holland, Mary Olive Lady, Rachel Copenhagen, and Lois Jean Sider. Each one made an impact on Sikalongo and played a role in its history.

The single women made direct contributions to the work at Sikalongo

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<sup>21</sup> See photo in Dwight Thomas, "A History of Sikalongo Mission Part 1: Beginning a New Work, 1912-1931," *Brethren in Christ History and Life* 39, no. 3 (December 2016), 282.

<sup>22</sup> Arthur M. Jones, *African Rhythm* (London: International African Institute, 1954).

<sup>23</sup> Esther Mann, "August at Sikalongo," *Evangelical Visitor*, November 3, 1941, 9.

<sup>24</sup> Sister of Steleki Mudenda, interview, June 12, 2017.

Mission through teaching, administration, nursing, writing and editing, and village evangelism. The educational work of Anna Eyster, Anna Kettering, and Fannie Longenecker were crucial in improving Sikalongo's educational life. The nursing work of Edna Lehman, Kathryn (Becky) Hossler, and Rachel Copenhagen sustained and enhanced medical care for the Sikalongo community. The writing and editing work of Mary E. Heisey and Lois Jean Sider significantly enriched religious education. And, the persistent evangelistic work of Annie Winger and many other women strengthened and grew the church in the Sikalongo District.

Annie Winger's village trips exemplify the earnest contribution of single women to the life of Sikalongo Mission. She spent about three months in 1951 trekking from village to village, spending a week at each location.<sup>25</sup> In her *Evangelical Visitor* account, she noted that she took three Christian girls with her to help in various ways. Wanting to convey a descriptive image of her work to readers in America, Winger listed her travel supplies:

These are some of the things it takes to make up my camping outfit, A folding cot, a folding table, a folding chair, a roll of bedding, an air mattress, a box of cooking utensils and dishes, several boxes of provisions, a box with flannel graph pictures and similar articles, a suitcase, a blanket bag containing an extra coat, sweater and extra clothing for cooler weather. A tin and several small bags of mealie-meal, also a small bag of beans, and one of monkey nuts, 2 water buckets, a small wash tub which is used for laundry and also serves as my refrigerator, for I hang it in a shady cool place and put water in it, in which I place such foods as meat, butter, milk, etc.<sup>26</sup>

Winger's work was important both relationally and spiritually, and deserves more space than this essay can spare. That she made a valuable contribution to the work at Sikalongo through her village evangelism is undeniable.

However, mission life for single women posed special challenges. Throughout most of the first century of Brethren in Christ mission work in Africa, men made the decisions. Long after World War II, African Executive

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<sup>25</sup> Climenhaga, "Sikalongo Mission Station General Report - 1951," in *Handbook of Missions*, 1952, 103ff.

<sup>26</sup> Annie E. Winger, "Village Visitation in the Sikalongo Mission Area," *Evangelical Visitor*, July 23, 1951, 11.

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Boards were still composed entirely of men. Although single women enjoyed a degree of autonomy, they were subject to constant supervision and sometimes required to submit their finances to the male superintendent for review. They were abruptly shifted from mission station to mission station in order to fill temporary vacancies or furloughs. Although capable of greater responsibility, they frequently filled subordinate roles on behalf of their male supervisors. Some women, such as Frances Davidson, Anna Engle, Annie Winger, and Fannie Longenecker, were able to exercise their gifts by working away from the male-dominated mission structures or by carving out distinctive ministry roles. Others found reward in whatever they were asked to do. Despite needing to endure subordinate status, single women played a crucial role in denominational mission work during the twentieth century.

Moreover, the single women appear to have enjoyed deep bonds of friendship resulting from their unique status. They often did evangelistic work with each other and usually lived together in a separate “ladies’ cottage,” sharing household responsibilities as necessary. The ladies’ cottage remains at Sikalongo today with little change, although it is currently used as the house for the Sikalongo Church pastor.



*“Ladies’ cottage” at Sikalongo Mission. Photo courtesy of Brethren in Christ Library and Archives.*

This 1936 photograph shows the “maiden ladies” of that year:



*Single missionary women in 1936. Photo courtesy of Brethren in Christ Historical Library and Archives. Names?*

The unique niche single women occupied in Brethren in Christ mission structure in Africa did not diminish their contributions. Their work had tangible outcomes, many of which remain today. In a delightful gesture of recognition, many single women are remembered today by having had their names given to African babies.

### *Missionary children*

Among the saddest events during the Climenhaga years was the death of their daughter, Dorothy, in November 1948.<sup>27</sup> Accounts of this event are heart-rending. Her death highlights the inescapable nature of life as a missionary child, which included a mixture of benefits and burdens. Many missionary children were separated from their parents at age six or seven to attend boarding schools. The experience was okay for some, but an unhappy circumstance for others. Separation from parents was difficult enough, but

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<sup>27</sup> Verna Ginder, “The Passing of Dorothy Lee [Climenhaga],” *Evangelical Visitor*, December 13, 1945, 10.

some Brethren in Christ missionary children report having been bullied in school because of their American citizenship. Frequently their alienation was not alleviated when they returned to North America. There, too, many missionary children felt like outsiders. The term “third culture kids” is now commonly applied to those who have this unique heritage.<sup>28</sup>

At the same time, many missionary children have fond childhood memories of their time in Africa. They remember African playmates, African baby sitters, and African workers with nostalgia. Some point to their atypical upbringings as a source of strength and self-sufficiency. Moreover, the evidence suggests that early exposure to mission work often led children of missionaries to continue in their parents’ footsteps. Ruth Taylor was born in Africa, grew up in Northern Rhodesia, and later returned to Africa as an adult with her husband, Chester Wingert. Anna Eyster, grew up as a



*Donna Climenhaga in a Sikalongo Village*

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<sup>28</sup> Donna F. Wenger, “Three Generations of Third Culture Kids,” *Brethren in Christ History and Life* 29, no. 3 (December 2006), 255-273; Harriet Sider Bicksler, “The Missionary Kid Experience,” *Shalom! A Journal for the Practice of Reconciliation*, Summer 1998, 2-5.

missionary child in South Africa and later worked for nearly two decades at Sikalongo. Children of the Manns, the Hersheys, the Climenhagas, the Kipes, the Hollands, the Thumas, the Books, and the Brubakers all came back to Africa later in life. Life as a missionary child had its benefits.

Missionary children also enjoyed special bonds of friendship which endured throughout their lives. Their shared experiences gave them common understandings. Below is photograph from the Missionary Conference at Sikalongo in 1949 showing missionary children wearing their craft project.



*Missionary children at the 1949 Sikalongo Missionary Conference. Photo courtesy of the Brethren in Christ Historical Library and Archives.*

### *Emergence of African independence*

One of the obvious trends after World War II was the emergence of African independence movements. International events and political sentiments in Africa were moving unmistakably toward self-determination and independence. In mission work, a concurrent trajectory toward indigenization began to shape the thinking of church leaders. These two trends progressed somewhat independent of each other but were clearly related.

Brethren in Christ missionaries whom I interviewed emphasized that they focused primarily on the work of the church and pointed out that their

non-involvement in political affairs was simply a reflection of the traditional denominational preference of remaining as apolitical as possible.<sup>29</sup> It is important to remember that many North American Brethren in Christ not only refused to be actively involved in military service, but many were even unwilling to vote in national elections. Despite their apolitical stance, it is clear that everyone was aware of current events.

The recognition of external political forces was not new for the Brethren in Christ in Africa. As early as 1929, Henry H. Brubaker, who had just then become African mission superintendent, wrote disapprovingly about political activism. At the time, the term “nationalism” was widely used and generally implied political opposition to colonial authority. As such, it usually had negative connotations for whites in southern Africa. Brubaker was reacting specifically to the so-called “Ethiopian Movement” and its impact. He expressed “grave concern,” describing the movement as “a Nationalist feeling arising among the natives strongly influenced by Bolshevistic propaganda.” Moreover, Brubaker suggested that a direct link existed between the movement and the African Episcopal Church, which was making inroads in Northern Rhodesia at the time.<sup>30</sup> In an earlier essay on the life of David Moyo, Frances Davidson’s co-worker, I documented Moyo’s connection to the African Episcopal Church and suggested the likelihood that his political involvement may have contributed to his dismissal from Macha. Statements like Brubaker’s lead me believe that some missionaries probably projected their political biases onto Africans who displayed political inclinations.

Brubaker’s discomfort with political dissent surfaced again in 1948 in the minutes of the Executive Board:

Following prayer by Brother Brubaker a short time was spent in discussing the African unrest which is so apparent in the Colony. Expressions of regret were voiced and petitions arose to our Heavenly Father on behalf of the African people of the Colony.

It was our general opinion that some of our African leaders be spoken to about general conditions and that we endeavour to enlist

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<sup>29</sup> George Kibler, phone interview, March 30, 2017, phone; Keith Ulery, interview, January 27, 2016; David M. Brubaker, interview, March 27, 2017.

<sup>30</sup> Henry H. Brubaker, “African General Report, 1929,” in *Handbook of Mission*, 1930, 45.



their influence in behalf of their own people in guiding them in their actions if the spirit of unrest reaches our mission stations.<sup>31</sup>

The “unrest” mentioned here is undoubtedly related to rumblings of independence that were beginning to surface.

After World War II, signs of unrest appeared everywhere. The nationalistic trajectory toward self-determination and independence gained momentum and continued throughout the decade of the 1950s.<sup>32</sup> In 1945, the Pan-African Congress met in Manchester, England, issuing a strong statement demanding independence for Africa. Similar sentiments for self-determination began to express themselves in the Rhodesias. The Federation of African Welfare Societies (FAWS), a forerunner of later black political parties, began in 1946.<sup>33</sup> FAWS changed its name to the Northern Rhodesia African Congress (NRAC) and elected Mbikusita Lewanika as their president. Both Harry Nkumbula<sup>34</sup> and Kenneth Kaunda<sup>35</sup> began to engage in campaigns for political equality and self-determination. Nkumbula worked with Nyasaland’s Hastings Kamuzu Banda in 1949 to draft a document that expressed African opposition to the proposed White-dominated Central African Federation. Nkumbula defeated Mbikusita Lewanika in 1951 and the party was renamed African National Congress of Northern Rhodesia. The formation of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1953 was viewed by many as an effort to maintain the status quo of white minority rule and led to continued opposition from Kaunda

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<sup>32</sup> For a thorough historical analysis of Zambia’s move to independence, see Robert I. Rotberg and University Harvard, *The Rise of Nationalism in Central Africa: the Making of Malawi and Zambia, 1873-1964* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971); Jan-Bart Gewald, Marja Hinfelaar, and Giacomo Macola, *Living the End of Empire: Politics and Society in Late Colonial Zambia* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011).

<sup>33</sup> Rhodesia Federation of African Welfare Societies in Southern Rhodesia, *Origin and Development of the African Welfare Movement: Together with the Annual Report of the Federation of African Welfare Societies in Southern Rhodesia for the Year Ended 31st March, 1955* (Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia: Federation of African Welfare Societies in Southern Rhodesia, 1955).

<sup>34</sup> Harry Nkumbula Sources: Giacomo Macola, *Liberal Nationalism in Central Africa: A Biography of Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula*, 1st ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010). Goodwin B. Mwangilwa, *Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula: A Biography of the Old Lion of Zambia* (Lusaka: Multimedia Publications, 1982).

<sup>35</sup> Kenneth Kaunda Sources: Colin M. Morris and Kenneth D. Kaunda, *Black Government?: A Discussion between Colin Morris and Kenneth Kaunda* (Lusaka, Northern Rhodesia: United Society for Christian Literature, 1960).; Kenneth D. Kaunda, *Zambia, Independence and Beyond: The Speeches of Kenneth Kaunda* (London: Nelson, 1966).; Kenneth D. Kaunda and Colin M. Morris, *A Humanist in Africa: Letters to Colin M. Morris from Kenneth D. Kaunda* (Nashville,: Abingdon Press, 1966).;

and Nkumbula and others. These included political activism among teachers and boycotts in Lusaka in the mid-1950s.

Concurrent with nationalistic political currents after World War II, a new generation of Brethren in Christ entered mission work and older ones retired. Most of the younger generation had attended either Upland College (formerly Beulah College in Upland, California) or Messiah College. They brought fresh thinking and youthful enthusiasm to the field.<sup>36</sup> The idea of indigenization was probably the dominant new direction in missions in the mid-twentieth century. The term “indigenization” was not new, but it achieved fresh potency after World War II. In missiological circles, it was frequently associated with the so-called three-self principle of missions: self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating. How this concept came into denominational thinking is unclear, but by 1948, it began to surface in church documents. The minutes from the 1948 joint meeting of the American delegation (Henry N. Hostetter and Graybill Wolgemuth) and the Executive Board specifically mention two of the three “selfs.” Article X stated the question bluntly:

ARTICLE X. What can the church in America expect relative to a self-supporting, self-governing African church?

The statement was accepted in that we look forward to an ultimate self-supporting, self-governing Church. This aim is in line with the general view taken by missionary bodies operating in Africa. We many times deplore the progress being made, but have not lost sight of our aim and continue toward that end.<sup>37</sup>

The idea continued to appear in Foreign Mission Board correspondence and other publications. It seems that Graybill Wolgemuth, one of the two men in the 1948 delegation and the newly-appointed chair of the Foreign Mission Board in 1950, was acquainted with the writings of Melvin Hodgins outlining and explaining the three-self concept. According to Frank Kipe,

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<sup>36</sup> A partial list of the Northern Rhodesian staff arranged by date of arrival: 1945, Ruth Hunt; 1946, Fannie Longenecker; 1946, Rhoda Lenhert; 1947, David and Dorcas Climenhaga; 1948, Anna Graybill; 1951, Earl and Lois Musser; 1951, Alvan and Ardys Thuma; 1952, Blanche (Pat) and H. Frank Kipe; 1953, A. Graybill and Ethel Brubaker; 1956, Agnes and Robert Lehman; 1958, Dorothy Gish; 1959, George and Rachel Kibler.

<sup>37</sup> Minutes of Joint Session, Delegation and Executive Board, September 29, 1948. The deputation's purpose was described in: “Missions Deputation,” 2ff.

Wolgemuth gave Hodgins' book, *The Indigenous Church*, to outgoing missionaries in the early 1950s in hopes that these ideas would be realized in Brethren in Christ mission work.<sup>38</sup>

Denominational structural changes also contributed to the climate of change for African missionaries. Wolgemuth's new role as chair of the Foreign Mission Board was mentioned above. However, in the same year, Arthur Climenhaga was ordained as the bishop and replaced Brubaker as African mission superintendent<sup>39</sup> This marks a significant change of leadership for Brethren in Christ missions, which coincided with the trend toward indigenization. Two years later, Northern Rhodesia chose its first two national overseers, Sampson Mudenda for Macha, and Peter Munsaka for Sikalongo.<sup>40</sup> The two men were ordained on August 17, 1956 at the African General Conference, which also celebrated 50 years of mission work in Northern Rhodesia.<sup>41</sup> These and other actions signaled denominational commitment to developing national leadership.

Despite these obvious signs of a desire to indigenize, missionaries and leaders continued to be wary of active political engagement. Item 27 of the Executive Board minutes from September 1952 stated plainly that members should not be involved in politics:

We reaffirm our church position that we do not take part in the political movements of a country. Church leaders have a larger job instructing the church members in the way and teachings of Christ.

It has been brought to our attention that certain leaders are taking part in movements which are detrimental to the church and their own spiritual welfare. As a combined group we feel that such should be lovingly admonished about the error of their way, and if they persist, they should be disciplined accordingly.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Melvin L. Hodges, *The Indigenous Church* (Springfield, MO.: Gospel Publishing House, 1953); H. Frank Kipe, "From Mission to Church : Zambia and Zimbabwe," *Brethren in Christ History and Life* 17, no. 2 (August 1994), 145-156.

<sup>39</sup> Henry N. Hostetter, "Foreign Mission Board Report," *Handbook of Missions*, 1951, 8-10.

<sup>40</sup> Anon., "Our African Conference," *Evangelical Visitor*, July 21, 1952, 11; Minutes of African Conference Minutes 1952, May 28, 1952.

<sup>41</sup> Arthur M. Climenhaga, "Preview of the Jubilee--Northern Rhodesia Field," *Evangelical Visitor*, Missions Supplement, June 18, 1956, 1.

<sup>42</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, Item 27.F, September 13, 1952.

In December, the Executive Board was more specific, instructing the church that the denomination would not allow members to hold official positions in the African Congress. Item 29 stated that failure to comply would result in suspension from membership in the church.<sup>43</sup> Missionaries were obviously trying to thread the needle and begin indigenizing the church while trying to navigate the political situation of the time.

Complicating the situation further, a number of people associated with the Brethren in Christ were actively involved in the independence movement. Vernon Mwaanga, son of Sikalongo Boys School teacher, Sampson Mwaanga, actively participated with the African National Congress of Northern Rhodesia. And, Elijah Mudenda, a prominent Sikalongo student, showed sympathies with independence factions in Northern Rhodesia.<sup>44</sup> None of my missionary interviews gave evidence that missionaries talked directly with African Brethren in Christ about politics. However, several Zambian church members stated unequivocally that sentiment within the national church strongly supported independence.<sup>45</sup> Despite the official denominational policies, it seems that church members held strong opinions but were reluctant to discuss political trends openly.

*Daniel Munkombwe: From enthusiastic debater to seasoned politician*

Another noteworthy Brethren in Christ student with political inclinations came to Sikalongo Boys School in 1950. Daniel Munkombwe spent his early years in the Macha area and during his primary years attended church schools near Macha.<sup>46</sup> He studied for two years at Sikalongo Boys School and then moved south to Matopo Mission for secondary school in 1952. Throughout his school years, Munkombwe says he had a keen interest in politics and excelled at debate. His uncle, Sampson Mwaanga, taught at Sikalongo Boys School during the 1940s and was an independent thinker with keen political instincts. Mwaanga had a strong influence on Munkombwe's ambitions. Moreover, Mwaanga's son,

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<sup>43</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, Item 29, December 31, 1952.

<sup>44</sup> Daniel Munkombwe, interview, January, 2017.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.; Dennis Mweetwa, interview, January 17, 2017.

<sup>46</sup> Daniel Munkombwe, interview, July 6, 2008.; Daniel C. Munkombwe, *The Politics of Influence: An Autobiography by Daniel C. Munkombwe* (Lusaka: Fleetwood Publishing Company, 2014).

Vernon J. Mwaanga, was an age mate of Munkombwe's and also showed an early predisposition to political activism. Both men spent their adult years in politics. Munkombwe's inclinations eventually led him to get involved in the African independence movement as a young man. He does not recall specific political engagement at Sikalongo, but while a student at Matopo Mission School, Munkombwe and several other Matopo students clandestinely went to Bulawayo to participate in political meetings of the African National Congress (ANC). He later attended the historic Monze meeting at which the NRC changed its name to African National Congress of Northern Rhodesia and elected Harry Nkumbula as their president.

From 1955-1972, Munkombwe held various positions within Zambian independence parties. In 1973, he was elected as Member of Parliament for Choma Central District and served three subsequent terms as MP. President Mwanawasa appointed him minister of the Southern Province in 2001, a role he occupied until 2012. Despite accusations from some of his detractors that he lacked scruples, Munkombwe credits his Brethren in Christ upbringing with providing him with a moral compass. In particular, he points back to his years at Sikalongo Boys School and Matopo Secondary School as formative times. Like Elijah Mudenda, Daniel Munkombwe found himself in an awkward position. When asked whether it was difficult to navigate the circumstances of those pre-independence years, he answered simply: "Sometimes I had to choose between my church and my country."<sup>47</sup> Although Munkombwe's choice to pursue political posts deviated from official Brethren in Christ policy, his sympathies for self-determination and independence from colonial rule were shared by most church members.<sup>48</sup> *The interplay between the trajectory toward independence and desires for indigenization*

The connection between the trend toward independence and denominational desires to indigenize is complicated. Lazarus Phiri, in his doctoral dissertation, divided Zambian Brethren in Christ history into roughly the same time periods as I have in this history. He argued that "the strategy of developing indigenous Church leaders was ambiguous

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<sup>47</sup> Daniel Munkombwe, interview, 2008.

<sup>48</sup> In nearly all of my independence-related interviews with Zambian Brethren in Christ, informants expressed this sentiment.

and delayed.” Furthermore, Phiri proposed that the process “was largely prompted by the prevailing nationalistic political climate of the 1950s and 1960s, and the indigenous desire for self-leadership.” I share Phiri’s viewpoint to a large degree, although, as I point out in this essay, one can see significant indications of missionary desire to indigenize as well.<sup>49</sup>

*Preparing for Independence: 1954-1964*

In addition to the shifting political and mission structures mentioned above, other significant changes were in motion at Sikalongo before David and Dorcas Climenhaga left in January 1954.<sup>50</sup> Blanche (Pat) and Frank Kipe came to Northern Rhodesia in 1953 and moved immediately to Sikalongo Mission. However, before long their role and location changed. The departure of the Climenhagas and the arrival of Ethel and Graybill Brubaker coincided with a new educational management structure for the Northern Rhodesian church. Climenhaga’s 1954 report noted that new government regulations had altered the situation in Brethren in Christ outschools:

At the beginning of the year we had 32 outschools, each a little outstation spreading the Gospel light. At the close of the year we have 26. We have had to close some schools due to new Government regulations—requiring an average attendance of, at least, 60 children, and at least two teachers per school. Some schools were not able to make an average attendance of 60. Wherever possible we have tried to join two schools together so as to continue to serve as many people as possible. We have had to close several other schools because of failure among the teachers. Some teachers have left teaching and taken a second wife. A couple of teachers have fallen morally. This loss of teachers coupled with increased Government regulations has made the staffing of all schools a most difficult thing. Your earnest prayers are solicited.<sup>51</sup>

One response to these new realities was to consolidate oversight of all Brethren in Christ outschools at a single location supervised by one office.

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<sup>43</sup> Lazarus Phiri, “The Brethren in Christ Mission in Zambia, 1906-1978: A Historical Study of Western Missionary Leadership Patterns and the Emergence of Tonga Church Leaders” (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 2003), xii-xiii.

<sup>50</sup> A. Graybill Brubaker, “Sikalongo Mission,” in *Handbook of Missions*, 1955, 32-34.

<sup>51</sup> David E. Climenhaga, “Northern Rhodesia Outstations,” in *Handbook of Missions*, 1954) 77.

1953 began the shift to centralized control of the outschools with Frank Kipe as the head in the newly-opened Nahumba office and Zambian assistants helping in Macha and Sikalongo districts.

The centralization of educational oversight at Nahumba meant that Sikalongo area schools no longer fell under the Sikalongo Mission superintendent but under the central office. In Climenhaga's words, "Before this year the outstations were attached to the two mission stations in Northern Rhodesia, Macha and Sikalongo. They are now joined together 'in one unit.'"<sup>52</sup> In subsequent years, especially after the creation of the position of Zambian bishop, this appears to have weakened the significance and decision-making power of mission superintendents in favor of the central office at Nahumba.

Climenhagas' departure from Sikalongo began a revolving door of missionary personnel that continued for several decades. The 12-year chronology below gives some indication of the turnover at Sikalongo:

1954-56: Ethel and Graybill Brubaker<sup>53</sup>

1956-57: Agnes and Robert Lehman<sup>54</sup>

1957-59: Gladys and Lewis B. Sider<sup>55</sup>

1959-61: George and Rachel Kibler<sup>56</sup>

1962-66: Keith and Lucy Ulery<sup>57</sup>

This frequent transition differed from earlier missionary tenures and was not always good for Sikalongo's well-being. It probably related directly to the centralizing of administration at Nahumba. It might also have been influenced by the trend toward indigenization and away from a missionary

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> A. Graybill Brubaker and Ethel Brubaker, "A. Graybill and Ethel Brubaker," in *My Story, My Song: Life Stories by Brethren in Christ Missionaries*, ed. E. Morris Sider ([Mount Joy, Pa.]: Brethren in Christ World Missions, 1989), 209-22.

<sup>54</sup> Agnes R. Lehman and J. Robert Lehman, "J. Robert and Agnes Lehman," in *My Story, My Song: Life Stories by Brethren in Christ Missionaries*, ed. E. Morris Sider ([Mount Joy, Pa.]: Brethren in Christ World Missions, 1989), 243-50.

<sup>55</sup> Gladys Sider and Lewis B. Sider, "Lewis and Gladys Sider," in *My Story, My Song: Life Stories by Brethren in Christ Missionaries*, ed. E. Morris Sider ([Mount Joy, Pa.]: Brethren in Christ World Missions, 1989), 429-37.; Lewis B. Sider, "Chapter 4 - Sikalongo and Macha," in *Missionary Reminiscences: An Autobiography* (Grantham: Author, 1989), 87-94.

<sup>56</sup> George Kibler, interviews, August 2, 2005; January 27, 2016; March 30, 2017.

<sup>57</sup> Keith and Lucy Ulery, interview, January 27, 2016.

anchor. Whatever the reasons, the transitory nature of leadership seems to have contributed to a less stable environment at Sikalongo than had been true prior to the departure of David and Dorcas Climenhaga.

Sikalongo Mission continued to move ahead despite the challenges of the time. Ethel and Graybill Brubaker provided strong leadership during their three years. Graybill's construction knowledge equipped him to oversee a number of building projects. Among them, was the construction of a completely new main house. Workers demolished the older building (constructed by Myron Taylor and renovated by Cecil Cullen) and built a new house at the same location. Other building projects related to the school or to the clinic. For example, Brubaker supervised the construction of a new 12-bed ward at the Sikalongo Clinic, which was made possible by a partial grant from the Northern Rhodesia Medical Department.<sup>58</sup> He also supervised construction of a new dormitory for the school and the addition of a metal roof.<sup>59</sup>

### *Sikalongo Boys School*

Like later Sikalongo missionaries, Graybill Brubaker was eager to maintain a high level of academic achievement at Sikalongo and encouraged staff and students to strive to attain this. It appears that he maintained a busy schedule and expected the students to do likewise. In a 1956 article, Brubaker described a typical day at Sikalongo Boys School, which began with the "rising bell" at 5:45 a.m. and included academic studies and manual labor and finally ended at 5:30 p.m. with supper.<sup>60</sup>

The 1956 *Handbook of Missions* report noted that there were 137 boys in the school in 1955 and some had to be turned away because of government limitations.<sup>61</sup> Brubaker was helped by Anna Kettering, who had come to Sikalongo in 1951. However, shifts in educational trends in the early 1950s began to impact Brethren in Christ schools, including Sikalongo Boys School. Specifically, the government wanted only upper primary girls' schools to be on mission stations. Item 16 of the 1956 Executive Board minutes from May 2 stated:

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<sup>58</sup> Minutes of African Conference, Item 1.F, May 10, 1955.

<sup>59</sup> Photograph caption, "Sikalongo School Building..." *Evangelical Visitor*, January 30, 1956, 11.





*Graybill Brubaker*

Since there is a strong trend in N. R. African education for all male upper primary schools to become boarding establishments in reserve areas under the direction of the Manager of Schools but not on a mission station; and since the African Education Department has stated the policy of keeping girls' upper primary schools on mission stations: and since this involves the future of the Sikalongo boys' boarding school and raises the question as to whether Sikalongo should become a girls' boarding institution; Decided that this question should come to conference as a matter for discussion and for possible action.<sup>62</sup>

From this time forward, Sikalongo's mission school faced a series of complications and obstacles that ultimately led to difficulty for both the church and the community.

Jonathan Muleya's leadership during the early 1950s also played a role in keeping academic standards high at Sikalongo Boys School. However,

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<sup>60</sup> A. Graybill Brubaker, "The Glory and Grind of a Missionary Day," *Evangelical Visitor*, June 4, 1956, 7.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*; "General Report for Sikalongo Mission," in *Handbook of Missions*, 1956, 71ff.

<sup>62</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, Item 16, May 2, 1956.

in 1956 Jonathan Muleya went to Messiah College for four years of study. According to the 1957 *Handbook of Missions*, Muleya left in February 1956 with his wife and young son, Jacob.<sup>63</sup> Muleya's study at Messiah College was part of an intentional effort on the part of the North American church (with Messiah College assistance) to help train a new generation of African leaders. Denominational leadership in America at that time believed this sort of training would make a direct contribution to their desire to indigenize mission work in Africa. An article in the *Evangelical Visitor* announcing the Muleyas arrival in the United States recognized the importance of this effort: "The first African member of the African Brethren in Christ Church to set foot on American soil and to study on the Messiah College Campus under the student exchange plan, arrived in New York by plane with his wife and child on Friday, February 17."<sup>64</sup> Muleya was merely the first of a series of African leaders to come from Northern Rhodesia (later Zambia) to study at Messiah College.<sup>65</sup> After his return from studies at Messiah, he served at David Livingstone Teachers' College and later became the first Zambian Headmaster at Choma Secondary School.

With the same goal in mind, Wanezi Bible School in Southern Rhodesia established an "Advanced Course" and a "less Advanced" two-year course in 1956. Four students from Northern Rhodesia were among the early participants: Sampson Mudenda and Davidson Mushala in the "Advanced," and Peter Munsaka and Kalaluka Muchimba in the "Less Advanced."<sup>66</sup> That both Northern Rhodesia overseers (Mudenda and Munsaka) participated in this program is an indication of the serious desire to elevate national leadership in anticipation of increased autonomy. These educational efforts occurred at the same time that the church in Northern Rhodesia was taking other steps toward indigenization.

Muleya's departure from Sikalongo Boys School left a big gap. However, Stephen Muleya and other experienced educators stepped into the void. Stephen Muleya, for example, was assigned to be the assistant for the Christian

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<sup>63</sup> See Henry N. Hostetter, "The Muleyas Coming to America," *Evangelical Visitor*, January 30, 1956, 10; J. Robert Lehman, "Sikalongo Mission," in *Handbook of Missions* 1957, 23ff.

<sup>64</sup> Anon., "The Muleyas Arrive," *Evangelical Visitor*, March 26, 1956, 7.

<sup>65</sup> Others who came to Messiah College included Sampson Mudenda, Davison Mushala, and Jonathan Mwalu.

<sup>66</sup> Jesse F. Lady, "Wanezi Bible School Advanced Course Begun," *Evangelical Visitor*, March 26, 1956, 8.

Service League (CSL). The CSL, started in the early 1940s, continued to play a part in Sikalongo's educational life up to the mid-1960s. Executive Board Minutes from this time period show detailed curricular instructions for the CSL program, with specific designations for various ranks such as the Volunteer Corps, Willing Workers, Light Foot, Helping Hand, Ready Heart, Third Class, Second Class, First Class, Junior Leadership, Senior Leadership.<sup>67</sup> One set of minutes shows drawings indicating the hand sign for organization.

### *Sikalongo Clinic*

Staffing at Sikalongo Clinic was also a challenge at times. Gladys Lehman came in 1954 to replace Blanche (Pat) Kipe at Sikalongo Clinic, and in February 1956 Kathryn (Becky) Hossler arrived to take Lehman's place. During this time, the clinic appears to have been under-staffed, overworked, and under-supplied. The 1956 *Handbook of Missions* noted that the clinic was crowded and overloaded with "as many as 100 inpatients for 12 beds."<sup>68</sup>



*Sikalongo dispensary in the mid-1950s.*

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<sup>67</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, February 6, 1957.

<sup>68</sup> Brubaker, "General Report for Sikalongo Mission, 1956," 71.

The 1957 report stated that they had administered over 30,000 treatments during 1956.<sup>69</sup> In 1958, the African Executive Board expressed concern for the clinical work at Sikalongo and requested that the American Foreign Mission Board send Dr. Alvan Thuma back to the field as soon as possible in order to have two doctors at Macha, thus allowing more frequent visits by doctors to Sikalongo.

#### *Other events*

Other noteworthy events at Sikalongo included the wedding of Arthur Kutuywayo. He came to Sikalongo in 1930 and remained single until 1955. On April 29, Kutuywayo married a local woman, Ruth Mwaanga. He remained at Sikalongo until his death in 1977, and his wife still lives near the mission in 2017. The *Evangelical Visitor* documented the event, showing the happy couple just after their marriage.<sup>71</sup> The same year, 1955, was also noteworthy as the year construction began on Kariba Dam. The dam required resettlement of tens of thousands of Valley Tonga people and resulted in the destruction of habitat for local wildlife. Elizabeth Colson and others have documented this event and its impact in detail.<sup>72</sup> Some Valley Tonga resettled up the valley in the Sikalongo district. The increased population put additional strain on Sikalongo Clinic as the closest medical facility.

#### *The Jubilee Conference of 1956*

1956 was a pivotal year for the African church. It marked the fiftieth year of Brethren in Christ mission work in Northern Rhodesia, and the denomination celebrated it with a Jubilee Conference held at Macha Mission. As noted above, missionaries were already engaged in discussions about indigenization and the nation was experiencing political unrest. This conference presented an opportune moment to recognize 50 years of diligent mission work, make changes in mission structure, and discuss and implement new missiological strategies.

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<sup>69</sup> J. Robert Lehman, "Sikalongo Mission," *Handbook of Missions*, 1957, 23ff.

<sup>70</sup> Minutes of Northern Rhodesia Executive Committee, Item 9, June 9, 1960.

<sup>71</sup> Anna Kettering, "Teacher Arthur Kutuywayo Marries," *Evangelical Visitor*, August 15, 1955, 9.

<sup>72</sup> Elizabeth Colson, *The Social Consequences of Resettlement; the Impact of the Kariba Resettlement Upon the Gwembe Tonga* (Manchester, England. Published on behalf of the Institute for African Studies University of Zambia by Manchester University Press, 1971).

The Jubilee at Macha included moments for celebrating the accomplishments of the previous 50 years. It also featured a discussion of new structural changes that included regional councils led by Africans and the transfer of committees to “church control” (i.e., to African control), a new pastoral system, and a reorganized board structure aimed at greater African involvement in administrative affairs. Arthur Climenhaga’s preview of the event stated:

The African Conference this year is to be held at Macha Mission. The program is so arranged that the Church Conference with African members will be held on days including the Jubilee. Several features of the Conference are being included to mark the Jubilee celebration. The business conference on Thursday afternoon, August 16 has as the main subject of discussion the establishment of a pastoral system and the development of indigenous church administration in the Northern Rhodesia Church.

Friday, August 17, as the Jubilee day, is a fitting time for the first ordination of African ministers in the Northern Rhodesia Church. Overseers Peter Munsaka and Sampson Mudenda are to be ordained in the 8:30 a.m. service. Following a noon meal, the Jubilee Anniversary will be held. While most of the Conference is for church members only, the Anniversary celebration is thrown open to all. When one considers that a thousand people are not uncommon for baptism-communion weekends, we will not be too surprised to see two to three thousand Africans in attendance at that service. Then, too, invitations are being issued to about seventy special African and European guests.<sup>73</sup>

The ordination of Peter Munsaka and Sampson Mudenda was understood by everyone as an important step toward indigenization in the Northern Rhodesian church. Both men had served as overseers since their election in 1952, but ordination conferred an increased degree of responsibility and legitimacy.

The inclusion in this conference of discussion related to “the development of indigenous church administration in the Northern Rhodesia Church”

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<sup>73</sup> Arthur M. Climenhaga, “Preview of the Jubilee – Northern Rhodesia Field,” *Evangelical Visitor*, Missions Supplement: Look on the Fields, June 18, 1956, 1.

marks a significant step forward. In the previous year, a special committee was established “for preparation of memorandum for indigenous church development.” They produced an outline of structural and strategic changes aimed at moving the church from missionary to national control. Ironically (and perhaps significantly), the working committee included no Africans!<sup>74</sup> Disappointingly, the language of related minutes made it quite clear that missionaries wanted to retain substantial control over the pace and direction of any changes. For example, the document recommended the establishment of district councils chaired by an African district superintendent, but “with missionary deputy of general superintendent present as adviser.” The document also stated: “All council deliberations and decisions to be only of an initiatory nature with transactions going to the Church Executive Committee for disposition either by giving answers necessary, or submitting major issues to Conference.”<sup>75</sup> However, despite limitations and the implicit caution, I believe their intent was genuine.



*Ordination of Rev. Sampson Mudenda and Rev. Peter Munsaka. Photo courtesy of Brethren in Christ Historical Library and Archives.*

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<sup>74</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, Item.29-B, August 16, 1955.<sup>68</sup> Brubaker, “General Report for Sikalongo Mission, 1956,” 71.

<sup>75</sup> Minutes of Missionary Conference, Article 4, December 7, 1955.

Arthur Climenhaga's article in the June 1955 issue of the *Evangelical Visitor* restated the three-self principle in order to emphasize the desired goal of indigenization.<sup>76</sup>

*From mission jubilee to national independence*

In November 1956, Ethel and Graybill Brubaker moved from Sikalongo to Nahumba and Agnes and Robert Lehman came to assume leadership at Sikalongo. The Lehmans' stay was short-lived, however, and they were replaced by Gladys and Lewis Sider in December 1957. Siders remained at Sikalongo for less than two years, leaving in October 1959. Despite these short tenures, work at Sikalongo Mission continued to move ahead. Workers built two new houses for teachers and installed the new metal roof on the school. The Siders moved into the new main house before it was entirely finished and had to complete the work while living in it. Lehman noted in his 1958 report that Sikalongo students had performed well and 19 had qualified for further training.<sup>77</sup> Church work included the usual weekly services with several revivals per year. 1959 was especially successful in bringing new members into the church with 30 baptisms.<sup>78</sup>

In 1958, the Methodist Church invited the Brethren in Christ to cooperate with them in the Kafue Secondary School. At that time, the government was pushing hard to develop secondary education, but denominational leadership did not feel it was possible for the Brethren in Christ to open a secondary school. So the African Executive Board agreed to transfer Anna Kettering to Kafue to represent the denomination.<sup>79</sup> She was replaced at Sikalongo by Joseph Moono. Kettering had provided strong, capable leadership at Sikalongo Boys School and the school thrived under her leadership. After leaving Sikalongo, she continued to make important contributions to the Church's educational efforts. Below is a picture of Kettering with Brethren in Christ students whom she taught at Kafue.

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<sup>76</sup> Arthur M. Climenhaga, "The Brethren in Christ Church in Rhodesia: How Far... Self-Propagating? Self-Supporting? Self-Governing?," *Evangelical Visitor, Missions Supplement: Look On The Fields*, June, 1955, 1-2.

<sup>77</sup> J. Robert Lehman, "Sikalongo Mission," in *Handbook of Missions*, 1959, 80.

<sup>78</sup> Lewis B. Sider and Kathryn Hossler, "Sikalongo Mission," in *Handbook of Missions*, 1959, 18-19.

<sup>79</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, January 29, 1958.



*Anna Kettering with BIC students whom she taught at Kafue*

Joseph Moono was a skilled educator and a capable administrator, who later worked with George Kibler as one of the regional school managers of Brethren in Christ schools.<sup>80</sup> Lewis Sider's glowing biographical description of Moono suggests not only his admiration for Moono, but the intense desire of missionaries to see nationals take leadership roles. Sider noted that Moono was raised in a Brethren in Christ family and nurtured by church leaders.<sup>81</sup> His early education was in denominational schools, but he continued at Chikankata Teacher Training School and did additional studies at Chalimbana Training College. Sider stated:

He is an outstanding Christian leader. The understanding and spirit with which he underwent the recent change of superintendents at Sikalongo was commendable. Beginning with the school year in July he has taken over fuller responsibilities. He takes responsibility humbly but with efficiency and determination and cooperates well with the missionaries. His is not an easy task. He acts as liaison between his African staff and the missionaries.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> George Kibler, phone interview, March 30, 2017.

<sup>81</sup> Lewis B. Sider, "Headmaster at Sikalongo Mission," *Evangelical Visitor*, December 15, 1958, 5-7.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.



It appears that the Moono family was especially gifted. Sider's account noted that Joseph, along with both of his brothers, John and Albert, served as members of the then-recently-established Northern Rhodesian Executive Committee. Moono is pictured with other 1957-58 Sikalongo Boys School staff in a photograph which appeared in the same *Evangelical Visitor* article.



*1958 Sikalongo Boys School staff. From left to right: Stephen Muleya, Daniel Mwaanga, Arthur Kutwayo, Jonah Munsanje, Jacob Muchimba, Isaiah Muleya, and Headmaster Joseph Moono. Photo courtesy of Brethren in Christ Historical Library and Archives.*

Most of these men served for many years in educational and administrative roles within the denomination. Stephen Muleya taught and held positions on various committees; Arthur Kutwayo worked at Sikalongo Boys School and the clinic, and also held denominational roles; Jonah Munsanje was among the first members of the Northern Rhodesian Executive Committee, Jacob Muchimba taught in church schools and became a headmaster, and Joseph Moono became one of the Managers of Schools. Sikalongo was where these men first honed their educational and managerial skills.

#### *Sikalongo Mission and Church*

George and Rachel Kibler came to Sikalongo in July 1959, remained for two years, and were transferred to Macha. Keith and Lucy Ulery followed them at Sikalongo in 1962. During the years leading up to independence,

Sikalongo missionaries worked with local people to strengthen and improve services at the Mission. The Executive Board approved the burning of 100,000 bricks for building projects at Sikalongo in 1959.<sup>83</sup> The Board also allocated a tractor and a plow to Sikalongo, and approved money to purchase a maize sheller.<sup>84</sup> And in 1960, Sikalongo was given a store license to sell goods to the community.<sup>85</sup> Paul Muleya played a central role in Sikalongo's Mission Store for some years afterwards.

After his ordination in 1956, Peter Munsaka continued as the Overseer for the Sikalongo District, visiting outstation churches and schools and encouraging spiritual development. Arthur Kutwayo, along with other loyal members, helped guide ministry at Sikalongo Mission Church. Manchisi Davidson Mukonka was chosen to serve as a second deacon at Sikalongo Mission, alongside Emerson Munsaka. Semi-annual revival meetings were common at the time and Sikalongo's revivals featured a series of well-known Zambian evangelists: Jack Munsaka (a former Sikalongo Boys School student), Mizinga, Kalaluka, and Mafulo. These religious efforts yielded positive results for the church. George Kibler noted that fifty Sikalongo area people were baptized in 1961.<sup>86</sup>

Broader church developments in the years leading up to independence had an impact on life at Sikalongo and other mission stations. Opposition to the Federation escalated after 1955 and the divide between Southern Rhodesia and Northern Rhodesia widened. As a result, it became increasingly evident that each Rhodesia would need its own denominational administrative structure. In response, mission leadership created new board and committee structures. In January 1957, the Northern Rhodesia Executive Committee held its first meeting at Macha. Its membership included American missionaries, but most members of the committee were African church leaders representing various segments of the constituency:

### **Missionaries**

Arthur Climenhaga, *chair*

Ira Stern, *Macha Mission superintendent*

Graybill Brubker, *outstation supervisor*

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<sup>83</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, February 10, 1959.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, Items 13-14.

<sup>85</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, December 8, 1960.

<sup>86</sup> George Kibler, "Sikalongo Mission," in *Handbook of Missions*, 1962, 58.

### Northern Rhodesian Leaders

Rev. Sampson Mudenda, *Macha overseer,*  
*Executive Committee secretary*  
Rev. Peter Munsaka, *Sikalongo overseer*  
Manchisi Mukonka, *Sikalongo deacon*  
Emerson Munsaka, *Sikalongo deacon*  
Apuleni Moono, *Macha deacon*  
Taul Chiyoma, *Macha deacon*  
Simon Munsaka, *evangelists representative*  
John Moono, *church treasurer*  
Simon Mudenda, *Macha teachers representative*  
Arthur Kutuywayo, *Sikalongo teachers representative*  
Jonah Moyo, *church representative*

Their primary item of business for the first meeting was the assignment of pastors at outstation churches in Sikalongo and Macha Districts respectively.<sup>87</sup> The following pastors were assigned to the Sikalongo District:

Nakeempa – Simon Mweetwa (teacher)  
Siamaluba – Millius Munkombwe (teacher)  
Mutandaalike – Jeremiah Muloongo (teacher)  
Siankope – Laban Chipali (teacher)  
Singani – Jobe Mucimba (teacher)  
Masopo – Henry Muntanga (teacher)  
Bbombo – Andrew Moono (teacher)  
Siacidinta – Joseph Mucimba (teacher)  
Mukombo – Simon Munsaka (evangelist)  
Mboole – Manchisi Mukonda (deacon)  
Siazwela – Sampson Mucimba (teacher)  
Mudukula – Jam Muleya (evangelist)

One can readily see the intimate connection between the school system and the local church congregations in this list of assignments. The early Brethren in Christ strategy of establishing schools and attaching churches to

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<sup>87</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, January 5, 1957.

those schools was still strongly-entrenched 50 years after Frances Davidson initiated this paradigm in 1906.

J. Earl Musser became the bishop for the Northern Rhodesian Brethren in Christ Church in 1962, almost two years before independence.<sup>88</sup> The choice of a North American missionary as the first Zambian bishop has been criticized by some. Others believe it was the right decision for the time. In my view, it is difficult to judge. In retrospect, it seems the Brethren in Christ could have moved faster to indigenize, and choosing a black bishop would have been one way to do that. However, the written record gives too few clues to clearly evaluate the situation and oral accounts generally seem overly-biased to me. It was obviously a difficult moment in time, complicated by secular political sentiments, internal denominational dynamics, and practical issues. I suspect all of these things contributed to the final decision.

Musser was consecrated as bishop on December 30, 1962 at Macha Mission. The circumstances of the event were noteworthy. Heavy rains preceded the meeting and a major river between Choma and Macha was swollen far beyond its normal width. When missionaries reached Mbabala river, they found it impossible to cross. But, they were determined to get to Macha for the consecration service. So, they threw a rope across the river, tied it to trees, and stretched it tight with help from a Volkswagon. One at a time, the intrepid missionaries walked across the strand of rope to the opposite side of the river. A number of adults remained with the children in Choma rather than risk their safety. The photograph accompanying Rachel Kibler's account in the *Evangelical Visitor* is remarkable.<sup>88</sup>



*Frank Kipe crossing the flooded Mbabala River in order to reach Macha for the consecration service of J. Earl Musser.*

## THOMAS: A History of Sikalongo Mission: Part 3

Musser's five-year tenure from 1963-1968 straddled Zambia's independence in October 1964, and he, along with others, had to adjust to significant governmental, political, and educational changes that accompanied the newly-gained freedom from British authority. It required delicate and experienced relational and administrative skills. Musser is pictured below administering communion at Sikalongo with Rev. Peter Munsaka and Rev. Keith Ulery.



*Sikalongo superintendent Keith Ulery, recently-consecrated bishop Earl Musser, and overseer Peter Munsaka.*

### *Sikalongo schools*

During the late 1950s, Sikalongo Boys School continued under the leadership of Joseph Moono. However, government policies were beginning to force the church to consider alternative educational possibilities for Sikalongo. The role of the government in the educational affairs of mission schools must not be overlooked when evaluating decisions made by missionaries and church leaders.<sup>90</sup> Both the British Colonial Office

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<sup>88</sup> Rachel M. Kibler, "Consecration of New Bishop," *Evangelical Visitor*, March 18, 1963, 6-7.

<sup>89</sup> Earl Musser and Lois Musser, "With Praying Hearts We Decided to Try," *Evangelical Visitor*, March 4, 1963, 6; Rachel Kibler, "Consecration of New Bishop."

<sup>90</sup> Conversations and correspondence with David M. Brubaker have been especially helpful in understanding the role of the government and the nature of church decisions in Northern Rhodesia relative to education.

and the independent Zambian government imposed policies on mission schools that forced a variety of adjustments. Although the church was able to choose its administrators and teachers, their salaries were paid by the government. For example, the 1959 minutes of the Executive Board noted that a government grant from the Ministry of African Education paid the full time salary of the Brethren in Christ education secretary in Northern Rhodesia (Graybill Brubaker) and the Assistant Education Secretary (Jospeh Moono).<sup>91</sup> Government financial support also required that missions follow government policies and abide by their regulations.

It has already been noted that government policies in the mid-1950s sought to develop more highly-trained educators and wanted to encourage the creation of more secondary schools. The church proposed the idea of turning Sikalongo Boys School into a boarding school for girls as a possible compromise that might be acceptable to the government. Unfortunately, this proposal was repeatedly denied. However, the church continued even after independence to try and convince the government to allow them to continue operating a boarding school at Sikalongo.<sup>92</sup>

Additionally, the re-evaluation of mission schools eventually led the denomination to entertain the possibility of establishing a secondary school in Choma. The acquisition of land at Nahumba in 1954 and the shift of administrative offices made this an attractive option. The decision in 1956 to assign Anna Kettering to the secondary school in Kafue turned out to be merely a first step toward later developments. Additionally, Item 6 of the Executive Board Minutes from December 28, 1959 suggested that the church should submit a request to the government to allow the church to convert Macha Girls School into a junior secondary boarding school for girls, and Sikalongo Boys School into a junior secondary boarding school for boys. As deliberations progressed, official responses made it clear that the government viewed the Macha proposal favorably but had a less positive outlook regarding Sikalongo.

The various government and denominational dynamics led the Brethren in Christ to focus on the idea of a co-educational secondary school located

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<sup>91</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, Item 4, January 1, 1959.

<sup>92</sup> This idea surfaces repeatedly in minutes and is confirmed by my conversations with David M. Brubaker.

at Nahumba, and to initiate discussions in 1960 with the Pilgrim Holiness Church about possible collaboration.<sup>93</sup> Plans for the proposed school moved remarkably fast. The government apparently viewed this move much more positively than other proposals and, in 1961, the Executive Board approved a detailed description of school operations.<sup>94</sup> Construction began almost immediately and, in August 1962, Choma Secondary accepted 70 boarding students.<sup>95</sup> In September 1963, the school officially opened with Harry Nkumbula, the Minister of African Education, in attendance.



*Harry Nkumbula, Minister of African Education for Northern Rhodesia, unveiling the Choma Secondary School cornerstone in September 1963.*

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<sup>93</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, Item 6, December 28, 1959; Minutes of Executive Board, Item 45, May 24, 1960.

<sup>94</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, Item 18, September 4, 1961.

<sup>95</sup> H. Frank Kipe and Blanche Kipe, "Answers to Prayer," *Evangelical Visitor*, July 9, 1962, 9.

Sikalongo Boys School continued to operate, despite the uncertainty of its future status. Henry N. Hostetter, Executive Secretary of Brethren in Christ World Missions visited Sikalongo in 1961 and described the situation at the time. He noted that Sikalongo “is our one mission station with no American in the schoolroom. All reports here indicate that the Africans who are in charge of the school program—doing all the teaching, one man serving as Headmaster—are doing a commendable piece of work.”<sup>96</sup> It is difficult to know whether Hostetter’s comment is meant as a commendation of the increased level of indigenization at Sikalongo, or whether it reflects a certain paternalistic spirit.

Unfortunately, it is likely that the Sikalongo community viewed the absence of an American presence at Sikalongo as evidence that the Brethren in Christ considered it to be less important than other mission stations, Macha in particular. This criticism can still be heard from Sikalongo people.<sup>97</sup> Many long-time Sikalongo residents I interviewed expressed frustration at what they perceived as an unequal distribution of resources, with Macha receiving preference over Sikalongo. They complained that the schools and the clinic both suffered as a result of a Macha bias. Moreover, they have suggested that even the assignment of national personnel favored so-called “Macha boys” over “Sikalongo boys.” I have not been able to fully judge the merits, but it seems that perhaps these complaints are not without some justification. However, Hostetter did concede that Sikalongo Clinic needed assistance: “It appears we could very well use a doctor here at Sikalongo if one were available and if we could arrange to finance such a program.”<sup>98</sup> In principle, at least, he seems to have been aware of the disparity between resources allocated to Macha Hospital and those given to Sikalongo.

Sikalongo mission and outstation schools continued to experience change during the early 1960s. Sikalongo’s headmaster, Joseph Moono, was pulled away to work as assistant manager of schools under Graybill Brubaker in 1962 with 13 schools under his supervision.<sup>99</sup> John Moono, Joseph’s brother, was assigned to oversee the outstation schools of the

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<sup>96</sup> Henry N. Hostetter, “Memoranda - African Missions Tour,” *Evangelical Visitor*, January 9, 1961, 10.

<sup>97</sup> Isaiah Muleya, Chief Singani, and Headman Siyayula, interviews.

<sup>98</sup> Hostetter, “Memoranda - African Missions Tour,” 10.

<sup>99</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, Item 33, May 7, 1962.



Sikalongo District, and Simon Mudenda supervised another 13 schools in the Macha District. The result was that by 1963 three African school managers supervised the outstation schools. This was yet another step towards indigenization of Brethren in Christ institutions in Northern Rhodesia. Missionaries retained supervision of the two mission schools, Keith Ulery at Sikalongo Boys School and George Kibler at Macha Girls School.<sup>100</sup> Once again in 1963, the idea of converting Sikalongo to a girls' school resurfaced as a way to continue operating the school and meet government expectations. Despite the extensive work of launching Choma Secondary School in September 1963, the church wanted to preserve boarding schools both at Sikalongo and Macha. That the Executive Board approved burning 100,000 bricks at Sikalongo testifies to their commitment to improve facilities at the mission.<sup>101</sup>

#### *Clinic ("hospital")*

During the late 1950s, Kathryn (Becky) Hossler was the only trained medical staff at Sikalongo Clinic (referred to as "Sikalongo Hospital" at the time), but she, too, forged ahead in an effort to provide the community with adequate health services. The clinic administered 21,031 outpatient treatments in 1959, a fact that highlighted the need for additional help and improved facilities. Sikalongo treated more patients than any of the Southern Rhodesian facilities and 70 percent of the number treated at Macha. The Executive Board responded to this need by approving a proposed plan for a new ward and delegating the decision of location to the superintendent and nurse in charge.<sup>102</sup> Additionally, recognizing the need for more help at Sikalongo, they approved additional staffing. Their minutes stated:

Whereas the in-patient load at Sikalongo Hospital has been running on average comparable with some hospitals staffed with doctors for a number of years; and Whereas consideration has been given in the past by the executive Board on the advisability of placing a second nurse there; and Whereas it has been indicated in consultation with

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<sup>100</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, Item 42, December 16, 1963.

<sup>101</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, Item 42, July 16, 1963.

<sup>102</sup> "Statistical Report on Medical Work in Africa," in *Handbook of Missions*, 1960, 57.

Dr. Kauffman that Mtshabezi Hospital could be operated with a missionary staff of a doctor and a nurse;

Therefore Decided that Sister Norma Brubaker be transferred to Sikalongo Mission to serve on the hospital staff and in such other duties as may be assigned, said transfer to take effect so that Sister Brubaker will arrive in the north no later than February 27. Further Decided that the General Superintendent, Sikalongo Mission Superintendent, and Dr. Thuma with Sisters Hossler and Brubaker work out a proportionate share of duties, with the understanding that Sister Hossler remains in charge of the hospital program. Further Decided that Dr. Thuma give brother Sider assistance in seeking for grant-in-aid for Sister Brubaker as a second nurse at Sikalongo.<sup>103</sup>

Despite these good intentions, Sikalongo Clinic remained overloaded, understaffed, and undersupplied for many years. As noted above, this situation was a source of frustration for Sikalongo residents for decades. This 1959 action at least provides evidence of a denominational desire to respond in proportion to the need.

Subsequent board actions approved roofing for the dispensary and the addition of running water in the maternity ward.<sup>104</sup> Later improvements at Sikalongo included the addition of a washroom/latrine, a salary for Samuel Muleya to serve as a helper at the clinic, and construction of a nurse's house.<sup>105</sup> From 1955-1978, a series of capable nurses came to help Sikalongo Clinic. Unfortunately, many of their African helpers receive almost no mention in the written record. Nevertheless, Sikalongo Clinic could not have survived without their labor:

- 1955-59: Kathryn (Becky) Hossler
- 1960-63: Mary E. Heisey
- 1963-66: Martha Lady
- 1967-69: Shirley Heisey
- 1971-74: Anne McEwan
- 1975-81: Mary E. Heisey

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<sup>103</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, Item 6, February 10, 1959.

<sup>104</sup> Minutes of Missionary Conference, Item 35, May 20, 1959.

<sup>105</sup> Minutes of Missionary Conference, Item 43, May 2, 1961; Minutes of Missionary Conference, Item 44, May 2, 1961; Minutes of Missionary Conference, Item 47, September 4, 1961.

Because they were often the only trained staff, they sometimes had to function as if they were medical doctors. The full impact of these nurses is a story that deserves to be told, but is beyond the scope of this essay.

*Tragic death of a Sikalongo Boys School student*

Among other noteworthy events in the Sikalongo area during this period, one deserves special mention. Jonathan Muleya's family has been mentioned a number of times in this history because of his role at Sikalongo and in the denomination. The family lived in Mudukula, a small village southeast of Sikalongo Mission, the same village in which Peter Munsaka was born. One of Mudukula's native sons achieved global recognition in the early 1960s. His name was Yotham Muleya, Jonathan's brother. Both brothers attended Brethren in Christ schools as children, Sikalongo Boys School in particular. Yotham was an extraordinary runner. In 1958, he competed on behalf of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nysaland in a three-mile race in Salisbury. He was almost barred from the race because of his color. William Dubois, the man in charge of applications, refused to admit Muleya. However, the association overruled Dubois, and Muleya went on to defeat the British runner, Gordon Pirie, by 100 yards.

Muleya was subsequently invited to attend Central Michigan College on a sports scholarship. Tragically, he and three other athletes were killed in a car accident en route to a competition. Muleya's remains were sent



*Yotham Muleya at the airport. Photo courtesy of Brethren in Christ Historical Library and Archives.*

back to his home village, where he was buried after a funeral service at Sikalongo Mission. The *Evangelical Visitor* included details about the event and a transcript of the funeral sermon delivered by Graybill Brubaker.<sup>106</sup> An earlier letter from Yotham to Anna Graybill indicates the closeness of his relationship to the Brethren in Christ and to people at Sikalongo Mission.<sup>107</sup>

American ministers from Michigan later donated money in Muleya's memory. The Northern Rhodesian Executive Committee decided to use the money for a communion table with 1 Corinthians 9:27 printed on it. The table was intended for use at the Sikalongo Mission Church.

*Continued rumblings of independence and implications for indigenization*

Indications of impending autonomy and the necessity for indigenization surfaced regularly in the years immediately preceding Zambian independence. Across the African continent, independence movements gained ground. In Northern Rhodesia, signs of change included the jailing of Kenneth Kaunda and Harry Nkumbula for their political activities. In 1959, the governor of Northern Rhodesia declared a state of emergency, arrested 45 members of the Zambia African National Congress including Kaunda, and banned the party. Disagreements within the ranks of black activists led to a number of divisions, with Kenneth Kaunda eventually assuming the mantle of leadership. In 1960, British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, delivered a speech to the South African parliament in which he made it clear that the British government saw black autonomy as inevitable, necessary, and desirable. The speech has come to be called the "Wind of Change" because of Macmillan's use of the phrase: "The wind of change is blowing through this continent. Whether we like it or not, this growth of national consciousness is a political fact."<sup>108</sup> The Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland had been established in August 1953, but it was beset with steady opposition up to its official dissolution in December 1963.

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<sup>106</sup> Anon, "Tribute to Yotham Muleya," *Evangelical Visitor*, December 28, 1959, 4-5; A. Graybill Brubaker, "Funeral Sermon for Yotham Muleya," *Evangelical Visitor*, February 22, 1960, 10.

<sup>107</sup> Yotham Muleya to Anna Graybill, December 1959, in *Evangelical Visitor*, February 22, 1960, 10.

<sup>108</sup> The following books are all by Harold Macmillan, *Winds of Change, 1914-1939* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966). *The Blast of War, 1939-1945* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968). *Tides of Fortune, 1945-1955*, vol. 3 (London: Macmillan, 1969). *Riding the Storm, 1956-1959* (London: Macmillan, 1971). *Pointing the Way, 1959-1961* (London: MacMillan, 1972). *At the End of the Day, 1961-1963*, (London: Macmillan, 1973).

Related winds of change can be seen within the Brethren in Christ in Northern Rhodesia. From missionaries, the dialog found its voice in “indigenization” language rather than political language. Oral reports from nationals, on the other hand, suggest that strong political sentiments existed but were often concealed in deference to the missionaries. That independence was not far from peoples’ thoughts can be seen throughout the 1950s in the actions of people like Daniel Munkombwe and Elijah Mudenda. Other indications of political sentiment existed. The 1960 minutes of the Northern Rhodesian Executive Committee noted that teachers at denominational schools were exerting a degree of collective resistance to missionary authority. Brethren in Christ members had previously been prohibited from becoming officials in the ANC and it seems that teachers’ organizations, Northern Rhodesia African Teachers Association (NORATA) in particular, were eliciting a degree of influence and loyalty that began to conflict with teachers’ denominational commitments.<sup>109</sup> The actions of teachers’ associations seem to have had political overtones that made missionaries uncomfortable. Sampson Mudenda confronted the political issues of his day directly in a paper delivered at a conference in Kenya. Entitled, “The Prophetic Christian and Local and National Politics,” the paper asked whether Christians should become totally involved in the political process and complete separate themselves from such affairs.<sup>110</sup> Mudenda’s response shows that he clearly favored non-involvement. However, that he addressed the issue this bluntly reflects the significance of the issue for Brethren in Christ in Africa.

### **Independence and Indigenization: 1964-1978**

#### *Independence and the immediate years after*

Zambia gained independence on October 24, 1964. It was a pivotal moment both for the Zambian people and the Brethren in Christ Church. Earl Musser had been chosen as bishop two years earlier, an important

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<sup>109</sup> Minutes of the Executive Board, Item 27.5, September 13, 1952; Minutes of Executive Board, Brethren in Christ Church in Africa, A Letter from Teachers (NORATA), March 5, 1959.

<sup>110</sup> Sampson Mudenda, “The Prophetic Christian and Local and National Politics,” *Evangelical Visitor*, October 1, 1962, 8-9.

step in the division of the two Rhodesias. But 1964 was filled with other events that signified fundamental shifts in Brethren in Christ life in Zambia. In May 1964, the North American church formally transferred church leadership from North America to the Brethren in Christ Church in Northern Rhodesia.

The *Evangelical Visitor* considered the event important enough to feature it on the cover of the June 22 issue.

The caption to the issue read:

Rev. Samuel Wolgemuth, Chairman of the Board for World Missions, presenting the document conferring full responsibility for church operations to the N. Rhodesia Church, Rev. Sampson Mudenda accepting in the name of the Brethren in Christ Church in N. Rhodesia.<sup>111</sup>

This moment marked an important milestone in the indigenization of Brethren in Christ mission work in Africa. Henry Hostetter's interpretation of the events of 1964 was effusive:

The full transfer of Church leadership to the Brethren in Christ Church in Africa in May of 1964 brought to fruition the goal of establishing a Church in Africa. It has been a most satisfactory experience. Right in the midst of it we have seen illustrated the power of Redeeming Grace to make all races one in Christ in: the choice by the Church of a missionary to be their Bishop in Rhodesia; the request of the Church leaders for missionary guidance in evangelism; the appointment of nationals to



Cover of June 22, 1964 edition of the *Evangelical Visitor*, featuring the transfer of responsibility for the Northern Rhodesia church leadership.

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<sup>111</sup> "Cover," *Evangelical Visitor*, June 22, 1964.

the principalships of the Secondary School at Matopo, the Teacher Training School at Mtshabezi, and the Macha Girls' School—positions formerly held by missionaries. Missionaries and nationals continue to work side by side with and under one another in the midst of political and racial agitations. We praise the Lord for these manifestations of a unified Christian witness.<sup>112</sup>

Earl Musser struck a similar tone in a portion of his report, which began “There Is Progress!”<sup>113</sup> His article in the *Evangelical Visitor* in June, entitled “Northern Rhodesia Regional Conference Meets,” describes the “epochal” meeting at which Northern Rhodesian church achieved autonomy.<sup>114</sup> And, Lois Musser’s account of independence celebrations in Lusaka conveyed an undeniable pride in the event.<sup>115</sup>

Others were less ebullient. Some from the American church mixed praise for Zambian independence with peculiar support for seemingly contrary sentiments. John N. Hostetter, editor of the *Visitor*, commented on independence in a perplexing juxtaposition of anti-communist sentiment and praise for Kaunda and Elijah Mudenda.<sup>116</sup> H. H. Brubaker’s history of denominational mission history and indigenizing events leading up to independence betrays a degree of self-rationalizing. He wrote: “There was a total absence of any feeling that that which was about to be done should have been done long ago.”<sup>117</sup> That seems hard to imagine. And, just a month earlier, Sampson Mudenda marked the moment with an article entitled “The Unfinished Task.” In it, he wrote about education, health and faith, but also included a section related to race relations.<sup>118</sup> Mudenda clearly viewed independence and the transfer of denominational control as merely first steps toward greater autonomy and equality in the church. And, one wonders whether members of the national church at the time might have thought this was a good thing, but could have occurred earlier.

The consequences of independence for Sikalongo varied. On the positive side, Zambian independence legitimized the authority of national

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<sup>112</sup> Henry N. Hostetter, “From the Executive Secretary,” in *Handbook of Missions*, 1965, 7.

<sup>113</sup> J. Earl Musser, “Zambia,” in *Handbook of Missions*, 1965, 24.

<sup>114</sup> “Northern Rhodesian Regional Conference Meets,” *Evangelical Visitor*, June 22, 1964, 7.

<sup>115</sup> John N. Hostetter, “Zambia,” *Evangelical Visitor*, February 15, 1965, 2.

<sup>116</sup> Henry H. Brubaker, “Macha Church, Zambia, Africa,” *Evangelical Visitor*, December 7, 1964, 3.

<sup>117</sup> Sampson Mudenda, “The Unfinished Task,” *Evangelical Visitor*, March 2, 1964, 6.

leadership in both secular and Christian spheres. However, American missionaries continued to control financial resources and maintained significant decision-making authority. After all, in 1964, the Ulerys and Gladys Lehman were in the lead positions of authority at Sikalongo, Earl Musser was the bishop, and Macha and Nahumba were both still under American missionary supervision. Concurrently, the shift to “national control” left pastoral and congregational leadership somewhat ill-defined, especially at Macha and Sikalongo. As a result, it became necessary to further redefine administrative structures and decision-making processes. The 1957 restructuring had created national “Executive Committees,” which fell under the “Executive Board.” Both Executive Committees (Southern Rhodesian and Northern Rhodesian) had a mixture of American missionaries and national leaders. However, membership on the Executive Board remained largely American missionaries. Illustrating this imbalance is the fact that even as late as August 1964, the nominating committee for the first African Brethren in Christ General Conference consisted of four Americans and only two Africans. From 1964 to the mid-1970s, American missionaries and the Zambian church worked to discover an administrative structure that represented true Zambian autonomy.

### *Sikalongo after independence*

Other changes occurred at the local level in 1964. In July, Peter Munsaka retired as overseer of the Sikalongo District and Davidson Mushala replaced him. Mushala’s story was unique. He came to Sikalongo in 1943 as an orphan. According to Earl Musser, he worked his way through primary school with encouragement from Anna Eyster. He took further studies at Wanezi Bible Institute and eventually studied for a year at Messiah College. After his selection as District superintendent, the Mushala family moved to Sikalongo where he continued in the role of overseer for five years.<sup>119</sup> With Africans in key administrative positions, the transition from missionary control to African control was well under way: Davidson Mushala as district superintendent of Sikalongo District, Sampson Mudenda as district

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<sup>119</sup> “News Notes,” *Evangelical Visitor*, May 25, 1964, 6-7; J. Earl Musser, “New District Superintendent for Sikalongo District,” *Evangelical Visitor*, September 14, 1964, 6.



superintendent of Macha District, John Moono managing outstations schools in the Sikalongo District, and Joseph Moono and Simon Mudenda managing outstations schools in the Macha District. The shift of the name from “overseer” to “district superintendent” no doubt implied a new level of responsibility.

In this new environment, the work of mission superintendents such as Keith Ulery appears to have focused more narrowly on the routine needs of the mission station. At Sikalongo, for example, mundane administrative matters needed attention: a sports fee was imposed, the mission purchase a power mower, gas stove and Milch cow, 100,000 bricks were approved, and the Executive Board approved an engine and electrification for Sikalongo Mission.<sup>120</sup> Shifts in the relationship between missionaries and the national church became more obvious as the decade progressed and were accompanied by intentional efforts to codify new structures. The Appendix of the “Minutes of the First General Conference of the Brethren in Christ Church in Africa” includes a complete version of the Manual of Doctrine and Government of the Brethren in Christ Church in Africa.<sup>121</sup> Moreover, a 1965 document specifically addressed the relationship of the Brethren in Christ Church in Africa and the Board for World Missions.<sup>122</sup>

Increasingly during the 1960s, much of the spiritual work in Zambia was in the hands of the national church, and missionaries found themselves preoccupied with institutional demands. During the latter half of the decade, this included the establishment of Choma Bookstore, the creation of a Bible institute at Sikalongo, helping launch a new Tonga Bible, expansion at Macha Hospital and the regional clinics, and the many-faceted educational program.<sup>123</sup> The *Evangelical Visitor* noted that the Sikalongo Clinic was merely one of a number of regional clinics under the supervision of Macha Hospital. Bishop Earl Musser and Dr. Robert Worman wrote letters describing the expansion of medical and educational services in Zambia

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<sup>120</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, Item 35, January 14, 1963; Minutes of Executove Board, Item 42, July 16, 1963; Keith Ulery and Lucy Ulery, “News Notes -- Sikalongo Mission,” *Evangelical Visitor*, February 15, 1965, 9.

<sup>121</sup> Minutes of General Conference in Africa, Appendix, August 30, 1964.

<sup>122</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, Item 12, October 26, 1965.

<sup>123</sup> Lamar F. Fretz, “Good News in Tonga,” *Evangelical Visitor*, September 28, 1964, 6; George Kibler and Rachel M. Kibler, “The New Choma Bookstore,” *Evangelical Visitor*, January 3, 1966, 9.

after independence. An article in the *Evangelical Visitor* began:

Newly independent Zambia is taking great strides in the enlargement of educational and medical services to its people. To the extent that it will increase our Christian witness and service, we are eager to cooperate and take advantage of their assistance in these programs.<sup>124</sup>

The article went on to describe expansion of the clinic system at Sikalongo, Singani, Batoka, and elsewhere. The Executive Board recognized the need for improvements at Sikalongo. In response, they established a special committee to plan for enhancements.

Worman's mention of government assistance highlights an important point. During the era of British colonial rule, Brethren in Christ schools and hospitals at Sikalongo and elsewhere received significant financial assistance from the government. This practice continued after independence, but it could not be sustained indefinitely. David Brubaker has noted that, during the 1960s, a significant portion of educational development in Brethren in Christ schools was funded by government grants.<sup>125</sup> A complete analysis of the impact of government funding for denominational schools is beyond the scope of this essay, but it is fair to state that the church could not have maintained its institutions without British support during the colonial period or support from the Zambian government after independence.

Peter Snelson, Michael J. Kelly, and Brandon Carmody, well-known scholars of Zambian education, have documented the role of government in a number of books.<sup>126</sup> Kelly suggested that the financial stress became progressively more acute from 1980 onward. He also argued that, despite British assistance before independence, too little attention had been given by the British South Africa Company (BSAC) to educating the

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<sup>124</sup> Editor, "Macha Hospital Expansion," *Evangelical Visitor*, December 6, 1965, 7.

<sup>125</sup> David M. Brubaker, correspondence and conversations with the author, 2016 and 2017.

<sup>126</sup> Peter Desmond Snelson, *Educational Development in Northern Rhodesia, 1883-1945*, 2nd ed. (Lusaka, Zambia: Kenneth Kaunda Foundation, 1985); Michael J. Kelly, *The Origins and Development of Education in Zambia: From Pre-Colonial Times to 1996* (Lusaka, Zambia: Image Publishers, 1999); M. J. Kelly, *The Financing of Education in Zambia* (Paris: International Institute for Educational Planning, 1991); M. J. Kelly, *Primary Education in a Heavily Indebted Poor Country: The Case of Zambia in the 1990s* (Lusaka: s.n., 1999); Brendan Patrick Carmody, *The Evolution of Education in Zambia* (Lusaka, Zambia: Bookworld Publishers, 2004); Brendan Patrick Carmody, *Religion and Education in Zambia* (Ndola, Zambia: Mission Press, 2004).

native population of Northern Rhodesia and that the result was a newly-independent nation with an under-educated population. He wrote:

The failure of the BSAC to invest in education during the 34 “somnolent years” [Peter Snelson’s words] of its rule meant that a generation and more of Northern Rhodesians lost their chance of receiving an education. This loss had its repercussions 40 years later when Zambia entered independence with a largely illiterate adult population and a pitifully small supply of educated manpower.<sup>127</sup>

These dynamics undoubtedly contributed to the sense of urgency that the newly-independent Zambian government felt in the mid-1960s to encourage educational efforts. Brethren in Christ schools benefitted greatly from the generosity of the moment.

The 1966 *Handbook of Missions* report of the Brethren in Christ education secretary, David Brubaker, emphasized the government’s desire for educational development:

Since Independence the Government has launched a Transitional Development Plan calling for very rapid expansion in both, primary and secondary facilities. In our own primary schools we are due to open in January, 19 new classes with a potential intake of 760 additional pupils, requiring 19 new teachers. This involved the erection of 30 new teachers’ houses and 30 new classrooms. The government made grants available to cover the cost of the teachers’ houses, the cost of steel frames, roof, and furniture for the classrooms. School councils and communities organized and worked hard to carry out these building projects and to do the “self-help” portion of the classrooms. This included brickmaking, carrying sand and water, finding builders and labourers and erecting the classroom walls. They did a commendable piece of work.<sup>128</sup>

Educational enhancements occurred both in Sikalongo and Macha Districts. Three Assistant Education Managers helped Brubaker implement the various projects. Frey Mweetwa became the Assistant Manager of Schools

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<sup>127</sup> Kelly, *The Financing of Education in Zambia*, 8; *Ibid.*, *Primary Education in a Heavily Indebted Poor Country*.

<sup>128</sup> David M. Brubaker, “Education Secretary (Nahumba Mission),” in *Handbook of Missions*, 1966, 70.

for the Sikalongo District at the end of 1965.<sup>129</sup>

*A Bible institute in Zambia*

In the wake of Zambia's independence, it became increasingly difficult for people to move between Rhodesia and Zambia. It was clear that the church in each country would need to become more autonomous. This led to discussions in a recently-created Theological College Administrative Committee about the possibility of a pastoral training program in Zambia. Item 11 of the minutes of June 14, 1966 listed a number of reasons for such a move, finally deciding that:

...a single stream Bible course be started in Zambia in 1967 and that Sikalongo Mission buildings be utilized. Further decided that the Sikalongo Mission Superintendent shall assume this work and that it follow the basic curriculum requirements of the church. Further decided that it be considered a branch of the current Bible Institute programme.<sup>130</sup>

The 1967 single stream Bible course led to the creation of Choma Bible Institute in 1968, which eventually came to be called Sikalongo Bible Institute (SBI). The Theological College Administrative Committee approved the creation of a Bible institute at Sikalongo in August 1966.<sup>131</sup>

Fred and Grace Holland began classes at Sikalongo in 1968. With their help, plans for the Bible school moved steadily ahead. The Handbook of Missions noted with excitement the impending opening:

The Church in Zambia will realize a long-cherished dream when Bible School opens for the first time in January, 1968. As training of our national pastors is a vital necessity, we thank God indeed. It is further planned that when the Bible School has been started, a mobile unit will go out into communities to take teaching and training to many who cannot leave their homes to go to the School. During this year preparations to open the school have included renovation of some present buildings and the building of a

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<sup>129</sup> For a biography of Frey Mweetwa, see Frey Sinankupa Chizongo Mweetwa, "The Autobiography of Frey Sinankupa Chizongo Mweetwa," *Brethren in Christ History and Life* 31, no. 3 (December 2008), 397-425.

<sup>130</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, Appendix, Item 11, June 14, 1966; J. Earl Musser, "Teaching Them to Observe All Things," *Evangelical Visitor*, January 16, 1967, 10.

<sup>131</sup> Minutes of General Conference in Africa, Item 6, August 26, 1966.

new washroom at Sikalongo Mission. We pray the Lord to lay His hands upon the persons who should be the students for this opening year.<sup>132</sup>

The inclusion of the idea of “a mobile unit” reflects the Hollands’ efforts to extend theological education beyond a central location through an itinerant teaching system. This eventually led them to develop a Theological Education by Extension (TEE) for the Brethren in Christ church in Zambia with extension centers at Halumba, Singani Central, Batoka and Mweebo.<sup>133</sup>

Choma Bible Institute opened formally at Sikalongo in 1968 with three students: Jonathan Mwaalu, William Silungwe, and Moses Munsaka.<sup>134</sup>



*Choma Bible Institute’s first three students. Left to right: William Silungwe, Jonathan Mwaalu, Moses Munsaka. Photo courtesy of Brethren in Christ Historical Library and Archives.*

In the beginning, the school functioned with limited facilities, taking advantage of vacant rooms and offices.

The advent of the Bible institute at Sikalongo not only contributed to the church through active pastoral training; it breathed new life into Sikalongo Mission.

Fred and Grace Holland played a pivotal role in opening Choma Bible Institute, but they were soon joined by others, notably Fannie Longenecker in 1969 and Eleanor and Marshall Poe in 1972. Moreover, the Bible school gave new focus

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<sup>132</sup> “Zambia,” in *Handbook of Missions*, 1968, 22-23..

<sup>133</sup> The story of Fred and Grace Holland can be found in: Fred Holland and Grace Holland, “Fred and Grace Holland,” in *My Story, My Song: Life Stories by Brethren in Christ Missionaries*, ed. E. Morris Sider ([Mount Joy, Pa.]: Brethren in Christ World Missions, 1989), 209-22. Their TEE work is well-documented in the *Evangelical Visitor*, in *Handbooks of Missions*, and in mission minutes. See, for example: Minutes of Theological College Administrative Committee in Minutes of Executive Board, Appendix, Item 12, June 14, 1966. Minutes of Executive Board, Item 31, April 1, 1971. Minutes of Executive Committee, Zambia, Item 12, August 20, 1970. See also: Grace Herr Holland, “Planting Seeds: A Missionary Story,” *Brethren in Christ History and Life* 39, no. 2 (August 2016), 1-213.

<sup>134</sup> Minutes of General Conference in Africa, Item 6, August 26, 1966.

and direction to the mission. The first graduates completed their courses at Choma Bible Institute in 1970. William Silungwe was posted at the new church in Choma; Jonathan Mwaala went to Livingstone to serve as Assistant Pastor; and Moses Munsaka went to Muchila as the chaplain for the recently-established rural clinic.<sup>135</sup>



*Sikalongo Bible Institute (Choma Bible Institute) graduates with missionaries Graybill Brubaker, Fannie Longenecker, and Frank Kipe. Photo courtesy of Brethren in Christ Historical Library and Archives.*

In spite of the small number of students in each class, the Bible school served a critical role in the Zambian Brethren in Christ Church from its inception and continues to do so nearly fifty years later.

### *Sikalongo Secondary School*

The difficulty of getting approval for a secondary school at Sikalongo plagued the church throughout the 1960s and into the following decade. Minutes of the third General Conference noted government hopes for educational expansion and the likely impact on the Brethren in Christ system. It also expressed some frustration at the reluctance of the Ministry to grant permission for secondary schools at Sikalongo and Macha.

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<sup>135</sup> Anon, "Choma Bible Institute Completes Second Year," in *Handbook of Missions*, (1970), 17.

On the secondary level, the Ministry is also scheduling considerable development. Applications for secondary schools at both Macha and Sikalongo have been before the Ministry for some years. We have now received the approval for two streams of Form I at Macha to open in 1967 in temporary quarters of the upper primary school. The Ministry is expected to make decision early in 1967 approving permanent sites for secondary schools to be developed during the four year plan. It is hoped that Macha will be approved as a permanent site for a 3:2 girls' school to open 1968 and Sikalongo to be approved to open as a 3:2 co-ed school sometime thereafter. We have no assurance that any of these permanent openings will be approved, but we anticipate at least a partially favourable decision.<sup>136</sup>

The Brethren in Christ maintained Sikalongo's boarding school throughout the 1960s. The church had appealed to the government repeatedly to allow a secondary school. Minutes from October 1968 stated:

Whereas it still seems the intention of the Ministry of Education is to close Macha Secondary School at the end of 1970 and,

Whereas the latest circular from ministry headquarters includes Sikalongo as one of the two proposed schools for Southern region,

Decided that as early as possible, we renew our emphasis on the Sikalongo site on the crest of the rise due east and adjacent to Sikalongo Mission. And submit to the Ministry of Education a proposed (1) Plot site plan, (2) Phasing plan for building, (3) Details of cost, (4) Phasing plan for expansion and development over a four to five-year period; And to secure permission from Chief Singani and support of District Secretary and Choma Rural Council on the basis that it has already been approved regionally and been passed through ministry headquarters.

Executive Board decided that if the Brethren in Christ are required to contribute 25% of the building cost of the new secondary school, that we request permission to build the secondary school on our own church property.

Further decided that for the present we allow Macha Mission to remain in the picture of secondary development and consider

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<sup>135</sup> Minutes of General Conference in Africa, Article 11.2, August 26, 1966.

possible progress on a step-by-step basis, in light of decisions made by the Ministry several years ago that are now being reconsidered.<sup>137</sup> Ultimately the government forced the church to completely close Sikalongo's boarding school in 1972.<sup>138</sup> It was a painful moment for the church and for the community.

Throughout its nearly 50-year history, the boarding school had served the community and the denomination well. Several generations of church leaders laid the foundations of their intellectual and spiritual lives at Sikalongo. Peter Munsaka, Sampson Mudenda, Jonathan Muleya, Elijah Mudenda, Daniel Munkombwe, Davidson Mushala, and a host of other Zambians spent some of their formative years at Sikalongo.

### *Sikalongo Clinic*

Martha Lady came to Sikalongo in 1963 to carry the responsibility of heading the clinic. She remained for four years and was followed by Shirley Heisey. Various improvements occurred during the 1960s with grant money from the government and donations from North America. Upon his retirement from working at Sikalongo Boys School in 1966, Arthur Kutwayo began to help at the clinic as an evangelist and chaplain.<sup>139</sup> In the same year, the African General Conference approved a four-year plan that included building two staff houses, a kitchen, and a tuberculosis unit.<sup>140</sup> A chapel was built in 1969. In that same year, two trained African nurses came to help Sikalongo, having graduated from Macha's first class of Zambia Enrolled Nurses.<sup>141</sup>

Several American nurses gave extended service to the Sikalongo community at the clinic. Rachel Copenhaver Sollenberger is the most notable recent example, having served as the nurse-in-charge for two decades. During the 1960s and 1970s, however, Mary E. Heisey played a pivotal role in maintaining health services to the Sikalongo community. She first came to Sikalongo in 1960 and stayed for three years. She returned in

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<sup>137</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, Item 19, October 1, 1968.

<sup>138</sup> Minutes of Zambia Regional Conference, Appendix B, Item 13, April 19, 1972.

<sup>139</sup> Minutes of General Conference in Africa, Article 12, Item 1.C., August 26, 1966.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, Article 12, Item 2.D, August 26, 1966.

<sup>141</sup> "By All Means Some," in *Handbook of Missions*, 1970, 19.





*Sikalongo dispensary and laundry unit in the late 1960s. Photo courtesy of Brethren in Christ Historical Library and Archives.*

1975 and remained for another six years. For most of her years at Sikalongo she was the only trained nurse on staff.

Heisey made other significant contributions to the life of the church. She was recognized as one of the best linguists among the missionaries and consequently served as the Tonga language teacher and examiner for Brethren in Christ missionaries. She developed a detailed Tonga syllabus for use by missionaries. She also applied her linguistic skill to music, collecting Tonga choruses. She is probably responsible for the Tonga translations of two choruses brought to Zambia by the evangelist, Maloka. “Ivangeli” and “Uluyando Ndupati” can still be heard occasionally in Brethren in Christ congregations, and the older generation sings them with a nostalgic enthusiasm that would have certainly pleased Mary Heisey. She also translated Christmas songs for use in Zambian settings. For many years, her Christmas songs held a special place in the hearts of Sikalongo church members. Heisey also helped translate teaching materials for use at Choma Bible Institute and the extension program.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Mary E. Heisey, “Mary E. Heisey,” in *My Story, My Song: Life Stories by Brethren in Christ Missionaries*, ed. E. Morris Sider ([Mount Joy, Pa.]: Brethren in Christ World Missions, 1989), 209-22.

*The Kipe years*

In 1968, H. Frank Kipe was elected bishop of the Zambian Brethren in Christ Church. The selection of Kipe as bishop has received some criticism. Some Zambian church members felt that Sampson Mudenda should have been chosen for the role.<sup>143</sup> It is an understandable point of view. Despite the incremental steps towards indigenization begun as early as 1948 and the turnover of autonomy in May 1964, the denomination had not yet chosen an African bishop for Zambia. These concerns notwithstanding, Kipe clearly intended to hasten the pace of indigenization. Kipe and others had obviously become more keenly aware of the inequities of the colonial era and the power imbalance that existed between missionaries and nationals. Various actions of the time attempted to reflect this new sensibility. In 1967, for example, the “Minutes of the Fourth General Conference of the Brethren in Christ Church in Africa” included a long list of recommended reading for missionaries and potential missionaries. Although some of the books on the list seem rather colonialistic by today’s standards, many were clearly intended to encourage a broader cultural awareness and sensitivity to racial and political inequities.<sup>144</sup>

Wanting to grow the church and at the same time move ahead faster with indigenization, Kipe and the denominational leadership began to promote a series of goals in 1970. These goals drew once again on the three-self principle that had surfaced more than 20 years earlier. The three primary objectives were: 1) to establish a strong self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating church in Africa; 2) to fulfill the Great Commission of Christ by extending the witness of Christ to all unevangelized near and far; and 3) to nurture all the members in the Word of God so that they become mature, soul-winning, and church-supporting members.<sup>145</sup> That Brethren in Christ World Missions was being influenced by the missiological trends of the time is evident in a page from the 1971 Handbook of Missions, entitled “Mission Strategy—Long Range.” A screened copy of the cover of

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<sup>143</sup> Stephen Muleya, interview, February 11, 2010. Sarah Muleya and Ruth Muleya, interview June 25, 2008; Daniel Munkombwe interview.

<sup>144</sup> Minutes of General Conference in Africa, Article 15, Item 2, August 25, 1967.

<sup>145</sup> Zambian Brethren in Christ Church, “Objectives and Goals—Brethren in Christ Church in Africa (as Presented to the General Conference, 1970),” (1971).

Donald McGavran's book, *Church Growth and Christian Mission*, appears in the background behind the title.<sup>146</sup> Coupled with these goals was a 10-year "draw down" of American financial support for the Zambian bishop.<sup>147</sup> The scheme proposed that support from North America for the bishop would decrease by 10 percent each year beginning in 1972. The timing was clearly meant to coincide with a transition from Kipe as bishop to a Zambian bishop.

*Critical voices*

In spite of the slow but measured progress towards indigenization, some were not happy with the institutional emphases of Brethren in Christ mission work in Zambia or the pace of indigenization. Glenn Schwartz was probably most outspoken in his criticism. He had come to Africa in 1962 and lived and worked in Zambia for nearly a decade. Schwartz argued that institutionalization of mission work ultimately leads to dependency and an unhealthy reliance on external resources—finances, personnel, etc. He was not alone in his thinking. Stan Shewmaker, an American missionary born in Zambia, expressed similar sentiments in his book, *Tonga Christianity*, published in 1970.<sup>148</sup> Schwartz expressed his thoughts forcefully during his time in Zambia. After serving with the Brethren in Christ in Africa, he returned to the United States and entered Fuller Theological Seminary. His masters' thesis dealt directly with issues related to Brethren in Christ work in Africa.<sup>149</sup> Whether Schwartz's criticisms contributed to their thinking or not, Brethren in Christ missionaries and the missions office in North America were obviously doing some self-examination. Their actions and rhetoric from this period reflect an increased desire to indigenize.

Kipe and other Zambian missionaries continued their steady march toward indigenization. Zambian administrative structures gradually

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<sup>147</sup> Minutes of Executive Committee, Item 5, March 14, 1970.

<sup>148</sup> M Stan Shewmaker, *Tonga Christianity* (South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1970).

<sup>149</sup> Glenn J. Schwartz, "Crucial Issues of the Brethren in Christ Church in Zambia" (masters thesis, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1974). Schwartz's subsequent work has continued to explore issues related to institutionalized missions and dependency syndrome. See, for example, Glenn Schwartz, "Is There a Cure for Dependency among Mission-Established Churches?," *World Mission Associates*, n.d.; Glenn J Schwartz, "When Charity Destroys Dignity and Sustainability," in *Improving Aid Effectiveness in Global Health*, ed. Elvira Beracochea (New York: Springer, 2015).

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changed during the early 1970s, shifting towards greater African involvement and fewer missionaries. The earlier “Zambian Executive Committee,” which fell under the control of the “Executive Board,” was converted to the “Zambian Executive Board,” with the understanding that it had full authority and autonomy.



*Zambia Church Executive Committee. Front row, left to right: Deacon Paul Muleya, Overseer William Silungwe, Bishop H. Frank Kipe, Rev. Sampson Mudenda, Hezekiah H. Kwamanakweenda. Second row, left to right: Mr. Ammon S. Mweetwa, Stephen P. Muleya, Rev. George K. Kibler, Mr. Frey S.C. Mweetwa, Mr. Andrea H. Munkwmbwe; Third row, left to right: Jonah C. Munsanhe, Treasurer, Rev. A Graybill Brubaker, Mr. Simon M. Ntabeni, Mr. Jonah R. Moyo, Secretary. Photo courtesy of Brethren in Christ Historical Library and Archives.*

The trend toward a “diminishing presence” was unsettling for some Zambian Brethren in Christ, so Earl Musser and Dr. Kenneth Hoover travelled from the United States to Africa to explain the American strategy.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Minutes of Zambian Executive Committee, Item.5, November 30, 1973; Minutes of Zambian Executive Board, Item.1, September 9, 1974.

They clarified the 10-year reduction plan, emphasizing that the American church did not want to support operational expenses. However, he assured the Zambian church that North America would continue to support the church through pastoral training, special projects and recruitment of volunteers.

### *Sikalongo Mission developments*

Although the establishment of Choma Bible Institute infused new life into Sikalongo Mission and brought new people to help, the mission station struggled at times. Sikalongo Boys School had indigenized earlier than any other school, but the absence of steady missionary leadership in the late 1960s and the constant uncertainty about the future of the school undoubtedly left people at Sikalongo somewhat unsettled. Hollands came, but were focused on the Bible Institute. Steve Fisher came, but left fairly soon thereafter. Davidson Mushala's term as district superintendent expired in April 1971, creating yet another vacuum. Additionally, it appears that financial problems were beginning to undermine the situation at Sikalongo. The 1971 minutes of the Executive Board stated: "It seems the time has come for a study of the future of Sikalongo Mission and its facilities..." A committee was established to study the issue.<sup>151</sup> By October 1971, things were critical enough that the Executive Board wrote:

Whereas, this committee has been asked to consider the future of Sikalongo Mission, including the Choma Bible Institute, the Primary School, the Hospital and Mission operation in general, and Whereas, these operations are tied together in the areas of common services, and

Whereas, certain Mission operations in the past have been a financial liability, and have not directly contributed to the goals of Church growth, and

Whereas, we feel that the development of the Bible School both in its residential and extension courses deserves high priority for personnel,

Decided to make the following recommendations:

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<sup>151</sup> Minutes of Executive Board,, Item 31, April 1, 1971.

- a. That for the present time the Bible School operation be considered the main function of the Mission;
- b. That the Church Executive Committee give early attention to the future location of the Bible School;
  - c. That for the present time, the Bible School assume responsibility for utilities (i.e. water and light) for the various units operating at Sikalongo Mission;
  - d. That the animal husbandry and extensive gardening projects be discontinued;
  - e. That the financial accounts of Sikalongo Mission be closed as of 31st December, 1971, and that the resulting asset or liability be the subject of Executive Board action;
  - f. That the medical programme be considered autonomous in its own right including building and maintenance and that it operate within the above framework for utilities;
  - g. That immediate notice be given to Mission workmen who may become redundant;
  - h. That the Study Committee reconvene and make decisions relative to the disposition of equipment, vehicles and other viable assets that are irrelevant to the operation, and to the allocation of lands;
  - i. That the Bible School take responsibility for the Mission phone and post bag;
  - j. That the Bishop meet with the heads of all the units to establish a Station Committee to ensure the smooth working of the whole programme.<sup>152</sup>

These actions look drastic, and the situation was undoubtedly exacerbated by the ongoing difficulty of getting government approval to establish a secondary school.

Despite the somewhat unsettling circumstances, people continued to do the work of the church. Frey Mweetwa assumed the pastoral role at Sikalongo Mission Church. The three Sikalongo District deacons—Paul Muleya (Sikalongo Mission), Arthur Kutuywayo (Siakongo North and East),

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<sup>152</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, Appendix J, October 12, 1971.

and Laban Chipali (West and South)—visited area churches, encouraging lay pastors and church members. Arthur Kutwayo continued evangelistic work at the clinic. Peter Munsaka, although old, continued to provide a stabilizing presence at Sikalongo. And, William Silungwe, who replaced Davidson Mushala as district superintendent, lent his quiet spirit to the mission.

*Will there be a Sikalongo Mission school?*

The situation with Sikalongo Mission School had been brewing for over some time. Even before independence, the government had begun to show a preference for secondary boarding schools over primary boarding schools. Throughout the 1960s, the Brethren in Christ education secretary and the Education Committee earnestly continued to seek approval to convert Sikalongo Boys School to a secondary boarding school. Responding to government denials, they periodically suggested the idea of becoming a girls' boarding school. As noted above, this, too, was rejected.

At the April meeting of the Zambian Regional Conference in 1972, delegates were told about the government decision that boarding facilities at Sikalongo Boys School must be closed. The reaction of the conference body was strong disapproval. After all, Sikalongo Boys School was one of the jewels of the Brethren in Christ educational crown. Most of the male Brethren in Christ leaders had studied there; Elijah Mudenda, a member of Kaunda's independent government, spent six years there; and scores of other students lived and studied on the mission compound. To not have a school at Sikalongo Mission was unthinkable. The conference report stated:

A deep concern came to Regional Conference over the action of the Ministry of Education in closing the boarding facilities of Sikalongo Upper Primary School. This was seen by some members as hindering the progress of educational affairs around Sikalongo. After a lengthy discussion, it was decided to choose two conference members to serve with our existing Education Committee to carry our concern to the Ministry of Education with a view to getting them to reverse their decision. Those chosen were Mr. Jonathan S. Muleya and Mr. John S. Munsaka.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Minutes of Zambia Regional Conference, Appendix B, Item 13, April 19, 1972.

Again in September 1972, the Zambian Executive Committee expressed its strong disapproval of the government decision and insisted that the decision be appealed. The decades-old suspicion that Sikalongo might have been slighted by denominational leadership in favor of Macha was addressed head-on in Appendix C:

- a. The Education Secretary gave a background of how it happened that Sikalongo was among those schools where boarding was closed in the Region. The Government policy of doing away with all boarding schools in the Region was fully explained and circular L/F. 29 dated 25th February, 1970 was read to the members. The Manager's reply dated 12th March, 1970 to the above-quoted circular was also read.
- b. Extracts from minutes of various meetings such as Local & Regional Councils of Education were also read. The Circular F/29 dated 17th December, 1971 was also read. All members were then convinced that paper work had gone through and that the management's stand on the issue was always clear with the Ministry and that there was not a time when one school was pushed above the other one by the Management.<sup>154</sup>

That last clause, "...there was not a time when one school was pushed above the other one by the Management," is obviously meant as a response to charges of bias in favor of Macha.

Again, at the October meeting, the Executive Board recommended "that we begin re-applying for a secondary school in the Sikalongo area." In an apparent effort to stave off potential criticism from abroad, the board noted that they did not intend to ask Americans to supply personnel.<sup>155</sup> At the December meeting of the Zambian Executive Committee, Stephen Muleya reluctantly reported that after a series of letters to officials, he was convinced the government was not likely to approve re-opening the primary boarding school. He therefore suggested that the denomination continue to push hard to get permission for a secondary school. This saga of denominational appeals and government denials continued until 1975, when the government reported that plans for increased educational facilities

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<sup>154</sup> Minutes of Zambia Regional Conference, Appendix C, Item 3.2, September 8, 1972.

<sup>155</sup> Minutes of Executive Board, Appendix A, Item 21, October 12, 1972.



in the Southern Province were on hold. It is likely that this decision was a result of the economic limitations of the government mentioned above.

### *Sikalongo Clinic*

Like the mission school, Sikalongo Clinic experienced increased financial pressure as a result of government cutbacks in assistance. The church did what it could to help during the 1970s, building a fence and providing a bore hole. But the mission board in North America was unable to provide nursing staff at points, and the monthly visits of a doctor from Macha were suspended due to distance and the diminished number of patients.<sup>156</sup> Arthur Kutwayo, who had been functioning as the clinic evangelist, died in December 1976. Manchisi Davidson Munkonka assumed his responsibilities at the clinic.

### *Three of the old guard pass on*

Arthur Kutwayo was one of several people who were intimately connected to Sikalongo Mission. His death in December 1976 left a big gap at the Mission.<sup>157</sup> Two other early Sikalongo pioneers died at nearly the same time. Anna Eyster, headmistress of the Boys School for 16 years, died in 1975. And, Peter Munsaka, long-time mission worker and the first Sikalongo district overseer, died in 1977. The passing of these three icons marked a new stage for Sikalongo. Few of the earliest mission workers remained. Frank Kipe wrote passionately about Peter Munsaka and his impact on Sikalongo Mission and the work of the church in Zambia.<sup>158</sup> Munsaka's death occurred on a Thursday during Zambia's General Conference. Out of respect for his contribution and his memory, conference suspended business for the day so people could travel to Sikalongo to offer their sympathies to the family and attend the funeral.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> Minutes of Executive Board Zambian Quorum, Item 3, June 21, 1973.

<sup>157</sup> Editor, "Arthur Kutwayo," *Evangelical Visitor*, February 25, 1977, 15.

<sup>158</sup> H. Frank Kipe, "We Stood Together: A Memorial to Peter Munsaka," *Evangelical Visitor*, October, 1977, 8, 10.

<sup>159</sup> Minutes of Zambian General Conference, Funeral of Reverend Peter Munsaka, August 17, 1977.

*Sikalongo Bible Institute*

The Bible Institute provided the brightest light at Sikalongo during the years leading up to 1978. The name was changed from “Choma Bible Institute” to “Sikalongo Bible Institute” in 1975, when it became evident that the school would remain at Sikalongo Mission.<sup>160</sup> Indeed, had it been moved, it is possible that the entire mission station would have dissolved. The infusion of new energy and enthusiasm created by the Bible Institute is evident in the written record. It can be seen in the staff, in their various activities, and in the students who attended and graduated from the school.

The Hollands laid the foundation for the success of the Bible Institute. Fred served as the principal for most of the early years, and he and Grace taught and produced learning materials. Their energies shifted to their Theological Education by Extension (TEE) work after a number of years, and the Hollands’ TEE program seems to have contributed to the excitement



*Fred Holland on the road with the Mobile Bible School. Photo courtesy of Brethren in Christ Historical Library and Archives.*

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<sup>160</sup> Minutes of Zambian Executive Board, Item 9, June 5, 1975.



*Grace Holland at work on TEE materials. Photo courtesy of Brethren in Christ Historical Library and Archives*

of the Bible Institute in the early years. Very early in their tenure, Fred and Grace established learning centers in four remote locations, and expanded the number to nine within several years.<sup>161</sup> The Hollands traveled regularly to the learning centers in order to coach and tutor students.<sup>162</sup>

The Holland's TEE paradigm has not lasted in the Zambian Brethren in Christ Church. But, ironically, the remarkably similar idea of "distance learning" is now spreading across the Zambian educational landscape.

Fannie Longenecker became a fixture at the Bible Institute after her arrival at Sikalongo. She was the backbone of the Bible Institute for 12 years, serving from 1969-1980, and returning in 1984, 1988-89, and 1991-92. She is fondly remembered even today by former students and many Sikalongo

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<sup>161</sup> Eleanor Poe, "T.E.E. In Africa," *Evangelical Visitor*, June 10, 1975, 8-9.

<sup>162</sup> Fred Holland and Grace Holland, "Teachers on Wheels," *Evangelical Visitor*, November 10, 1971, 8-11.



*Fannie Longenecker playing her accordion for a Zambian chorus. . Photo courtesy of Brethren in Christ Historical Library and Archives*

residents. Like Mary Heisey, Longenecker loved music and enjoyed playing her accordion with Bible School students.

Marshall Poe assumed the role of principal in 1974. He continued that role until the Hollands left, when he assumed the responsibilities of the TEE program. The Poes left Sikalongo in 1979. Sampson Mudenda became principal of Sikalongo Bible Institute in 1976 after his return from studies at Messiah College. From that point onward, nearly every principal of the Bible Institute was a Zambian national.

Although SBI has generally averaged about ten students per year across its history, its impact has been immense. The vast majority of today's pastors and church leaders in Zambia's Brethren in Christ Church studied at Sikalongo Bible Institute. The list is long: Jonathan Mwaalu, Thuma Hamukangandu, Joseph Sikalima, George Hansumo, Leonard Hamaseele, Moses Munsaka, Hopeday Botani, Charles Muunga, Daniel Njina, and Mudenda Halupepe. The school continues in 2017 with 10 students in attendance, and will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2018.

### A new period dawns

The changes at Sikalongo from 1947-1978 were enormous. The mission started as a mostly autonomous outpost managed by a white superintendent who also oversaw a series of outstation schools and churches. By 1978, many of those earlier responsibilities had shifted. Most roles were no longer filled by missionaries but had been indigenized. All of the Brethren in Christ schools were managed by Zambian nationals with Zambian teachers and a genuinely indigenous church was firmly established. Politically, the country went from British colonial rule through independence to stable self-rule. Institutionally, Sikalongo Mission ceased to operate as a farm and no longer had a boys' boarding school. But, in the place of a boarding school, a successful school for training Brethren in Christ pastors was established and continues to exist.

The next period in Sikalongo's history begins in 1978 with the installation of William Silungwe as Zambian bishop, and Jonathan Mwaalu as the national overseer. Both men were graduates of Choma Bible Institute. In 1976, Frank Kipe announced that he would not serve another term as bishop of the Zambian church. Elected as bishop-designate in 1976, Silungwe began his tenure as bishop in January 1978.<sup>163</sup> The Handbook of Missions noted the importance of this new phase in Zambian Brethren in Christ life: "In Zambia, the year 1978 represents a major step on the road to that Brethren in Christ fellowship becoming a self-propagating body. The consecration of Bishop William Silungwe on January 8 signals an era of new partnership relationships with the North American church."<sup>164</sup>

The remainder of this history of Sikalongo must be told by Zambians. It will probably take a different form than the first three parts. However, those who know Sikalongo well—especially those who have spent time in the community—understand the beauty of the place and charm of its people. The local Tonga are fond of saying, "If you step foot on this place once, you will have to come back." My wife and I have found that to be true. Despite its various trials, Sikalongo Mission, its workers, and the surrounding community maintain a passionate desire to serve the immediate region and beyond.

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<sup>163</sup> H. Frank Kipe, "Church in Zambia Elects Bishop-Designate," *Evangelical Visitor*, September 10, 1976, 8-9.

<sup>164</sup> "Rapid Growth of African Mission Program," in *Handbook of Missions*, 1978, 29.

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## **Shrinking Your Church to Discover the Kingdom: The Cost and Joy of Embracing Anabaptism**

By Gregory A. Boyd\*

I helped start Woodland Hills Church in the fall of 1992. In the beginning, we were an almost all-white Evangelical church that was supposed to minister to people in an almost all-white suburb of the Twin Cities. Shortly after we got going, however, I began to get a strong sense that what we thought we were supposed to be was quite different from what God intended us to become. Before too long, Woodland Hills was evolving into a congregation that was passionate about racial reconciliation and serving the city. As a result, we never actually made it into the suburbs, and we eventually began to lose our almost all-white status.

The biggest and most surprising way Woodland Hills began to change, however, was theological in nature. Throughout the 90s and into the turn of this century I found myself on a journey out of a rather typical American evangelical theology and model of church into a kingdom-centered theology and model of church—a theology and ecclesiology that I would eventually learn sat me squarely within the Anabaptist tradition.

I tried very hard to gently take my ever-growing evangelical congregation along with me in this journey. I introduced new ideas as softly as I could. I would downplay the more radical implications of these ideas and minimize the degree to which they conflicted with the standard evangelical beliefs and practices that many in my congregation still embraced. I'd like to believe that my motive for soft-pedaling these new convictions was strictly pedagogical in nature. I'd like to think I just wanted to give people sufficient time to process these new ideas.

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If I'm really honest with myself, however, I strongly suspect I was also motivated by a desire to keep pastoring as large a church as possible. By 2004, Woodland Hills Church had grown to roughly 5,000 regular attenders, and on some level I knew that if I really "came clean" about the more radical Anabaptist convictions I'd acquired over the last decade or so, a good portion of this crowd might not stick around.

The presidential election of 2004 provided me with an opportunity to find out. Like so many other evangelical pastors, in the months leading up to this election I was feeling an unprecedented amount of pressure to steer my "flock" in the "right" direction, which meant, encouraging them to vote for "the right" candidate and "the right position" on the conservative hot-button issues. Much of this pressure came from people in my own congregation who were getting stirred up watching evangelical television stations, listening to evangelical talk-show radio stations, or just reading evangelical propaganda. Among other things, I and my board were being asked to have our congregation sign various petitions and make various pledges, to hand out "voting information" leaflets to our attenders after our church services, to draw attention to various political happenings during our regular church announcements, etc.

Now, we had never been a church that got into politics, even prior to our evolution in an Anabaptist direction, so we refused to give into this pressure. This irritated some of the more conservative members of our church, and the leadership of Woodland Hills church began to be accused by some of steering clear of politics because we were afraid to take any stand that might offend the more liberal members of our congregation. One attender indecorously captured the sentiment of many when he angrily told me, "You guys just don't have the [courage] to stand up for God and for our country!"

Seeing that the level of frustration was escalating, I and my board decided we had come upon "a teaching opportunity." We believed it was time to quit minimizing the distinctly Anabaptist beliefs and practices we'd come to embrace and provide our congregation with a clear biblical explanation as to why we will never throw our hat in the ring of any political party or weigh in on any partisan issue. We sensed it was time for me to clearly and passionately spell out the radical difference between the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of the world and to clearly express the urgent need to



keep them separate—that is, to keep the kingdom “holy.” We believed it was time to drive home the truth that history demonstrates that the church’s witness is always compromised, if not completely undermined, when it tries to further its agenda through political means. And we sensed it was time to provide people with our theological rationale for why we have never had a flag in our church, why we never celebrate the fourth of July in church, why we don’t celebrate our military or condone any form of violence, and why we don’t conform to “normal” American evangelical churches in a number of other ways.

It’s not like I never touched on these topics before. I just had never done so as deeply, as clearly, as persistently, or as boldly as I did during this sermon series. The series, which lasted six weeks, was entitled “The Cross and the Sword,” and it fundamentally transformed our congregation.

The response to this series was telling on several accounts. For one thing, I had never received anything close to the amount of *positive* feedback I received throughout this sermon series. Some people literally wept with gratitude saying that they had always felt like “outsiders” in the evangelical community for not “towing the conservative party line” on politics. Others reported that their eyes had been opened to how they had unwittingly allowed political and national agendas and issues to cloud their vision of the uniquely beautiful kingdom of God.

But I also had never received anything close to the amount and intensity of negative feedback that I got throughout this sermon series. My messages have always been a bit edgy, at least by typical American evangelical standards, so I was used to occasionally engaging with an angry attendee at the end of my sermons. During this series, however, I regularly had to interact with groups of agitated people who would badger me with questions and/or occasional accusations.

The leadership of Woodland Hills Church had prepared ourselves to “take a hit” as a result of this sermon series, but no one anticipated it would be as large as it turned out. Close to a thousand people ended up leaving, which was roughly 20 percent of our congregation at the time. To be more precise, approximately 700 left during “The Cross and the Sword” series, and then another 300 joined them when I decided that some folks hadn’t fully grasped what I was saying, so I revisited the topic several months later in a fourth of July sermon.

At this point one of my board members jokingly suggested I should put together a “Church Shrinkage Seminar” and take it on the road as an alternative to the many “Church Growth Seminars” that were available.

The intensity and scope of this reaction—in a church that had always been identified as “left of center” by other evangelical churches in our area—confirmed our deepest concerns about the evangelical church in America. Among other things, it illustrated just how thoroughly many people have fused their faith with their politics as well as with a partisan interpretation of American values. In short, the astonishing reaction of so many in my church to this series simply confirmed how badly this series needed to be preached!

The months following “the great exodus,” as we like to call it, were difficult. The people who had left tended to be white folks who had been our biggest contributors. We had to downsize our budget by more than 30 percent, which in turn had serious ramifications for our staff. Most staff took voluntary pay cuts to allow us to retain as many people as possible. But even with these generous sacrifices, some very dear and hard-working friends had to be let go. *That* was the hardest part.

On top of this, we quickly noticed that the great exodus had begun to bring about a change in our demographics. We had always been a church that drew from both the city and the suburbs (our church building is literally on the property line dividing the city of St. Paul and the suburb of Maplewood). After the exodus, however, we began to draw more and more from the city, and these people tended to belong to a lower-income bracket and to be non-white. The result was that the needs of our congregation began to greatly outrun the recently-diminished resources that were available to meet those needs.

It was a tough situation, but out of this mess God began to birth something truly beautiful. For one thing, the sixteenth-century Anabaptists taught a “hermeneutic of obedience,” meaning that they believed that the mind could only see a truth to the degree that the heart was willing to submit to it. This principle was proven true in our experience, for as soon as we were willing to take a bold stand and passionately affirm our distinctly Anabaptist convictions, we began to see their beauty and importance more profoundly than we ever had before. The same convictions I used to soft-pedal quickly became the strongest rallying points for our congregation.

Not only this, but only when we gave ourselves permission to fearlessly proclaim our Anabaptist convictions, regardless of the cost, could we wake up to just how much our previous soft-pedaling had cost us. We had always prided ourselves on not being a numbers-obsessed consumer-driven church, but once we “came clean” with our radical convictions, it became clear that, as a matter of fact, we had been significantly consumer-driven. Around this same time we noticed that Paul’s concern was always to present disciples *fully mature* before Christ; he was never concerned with numbers. And so we reoriented our bulls eye from quantity to quality and put in place a rigorous 26-six week disciple-making program that equips people to enter into disciple-making missional communities.

We still have a ways to go, but I believe the depth of our disciple-making is much better than it ever has been in the past.

Another beautiful thing that God brought out of our tough situation were some remarkable kingdom partnerships. With our needs soaring and our resources significantly smaller, we had to ask God to help us get creative, and he did. We started developing relationships with a number of ministries and governmental agencies that aimed at doing things that we also wanted to do, such as feed hungry people, provide emergency aid to people in crisis, help homeless people get into affordable housing, provide a free day care for disadvantaged families, provide job training so people can get jobs their families can actually live on, help at risk youth, etc.

We eventually entered into a full partnership with these ministries and governmental agencies. The arrangement is that they bring to the table their expertise and we in turn allow them to use our building as an office for free while supporting their ministry with money, resources and volunteers. It’s a beautiful arrangement; the result is that our church has become a widely recognized service center for the poor, and we are forging new partnerships all the time. Were it not for the great exodus, I doubt we would have ever evolved as a church in such a radical service-oriented direction.

Finally, I ended up transforming “The Cross and the Sword” series into a book (*The Myth of a Christian Nation*), and I included a bit of the story of the great exodus in it. This story caught the eye of a lady who writes for the New York Times and, to make a long story short, her interview with me ended up on the front page of the New York Times. What is significant about this is that the international attention put us on other people’s radar.

BRETHREN IN CHRIST  
HISTORY & LIFE

We began hearing from individuals, small groups, and churches all over the globe who would tell us that the journey we had been on since the early 90s is very similar to the journey they had been on. The number of people who download our podcast each week went from several hundred to several thousand and now averages around 20,000.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. We have learned that there is an informal, grassroots, ever-expanding kingdom movement going on around the globe. For those of us who are passionate about the kingdom, this is incredibly exciting, and the fact that we at Woodland Hills Church get to play a role in developing and growing this movement makes it even more so.

But none of these beautiful and wholly unexpected developments would have taken place had we continued to play it safe. Sure, losing a significant percentage of your congregation isn't easy. But in light of all the remarkable kingdom things that God has brought out of this loss, no one in the leadership of Woodland Hills Church would hesitate in saying that it was more than worth it and that we'd do it again in a heartbeat if we had to.

Because sometimes you've got to be willing to shrink your church to discover the full beauty and joy of the kingdom. And brothers and sisters, it is worth it!

## Follow Peace and Holiness: My Life Among the Brethren in Christ

By John R. Yeatts\*

My parents were converts to peace and holiness. My father grew up in a family that was anything but peaceful. Growing up my father told many stories about his family. On one occasion, after my grandmother received a black eye from my grandfather, my father and uncle warned Grandpa Yeatts: that must never happen again to their mother.

When my father lived with his brother as a young man, he got a phone call in the middle of the night that his brother had been in a bar fight, and when my father arrived at the scene, he found my uncle had been hit over the head with a tire iron from which he developed a severe bruise over most of his head. The family suspected he received permanent brain damage. That injury was used to excuse my uncle's violent, irrational temper. On another occasion, my uncle awoke from a bar room fight to find his suit coat sliced through to the skin.

Years later, my uncle was attacked by young men who intended to rob him but left when they realized this was my cousin's father. That night, my uncle decided to no longer frequent bars, but instead he purposed to drink at home where he would be more safe.

My father was converted from that violent family into the peace-loving Brethren in Christ, in a tent meeting under the ministry of Arthur Climenhaga. Then he was discipled by Bishop O.B. Ulery, one of our denomination's leading proponents of both peace and holiness.

People in my home congregation would say: "If you want to find Bob Yeatts—my father—just look for O. B. Ulery, and Bob will be there. Although I was born one year after O. B. Ulery died, his shadow loomed over my home and congregation. Bishop Ulery walked on water in my household. I am still a good friend of his grandson David Ulery and his granddaughter, Beth Saba, who with her husband Costandy Saba pastor my

home congregation in Springfield, Ohio.

Carlton Wittlinger recounts that one day Bishop Ulery was sitting on his porch with his wife Effie when a man selling war bonds during the first World War approached. When Ulery explained his nonresistant views, the salesman asked, “What would you do if a German regiment came marching down this street toward your house?” Ulery replied, “And what do think that German regiment would do if I jumped up and shouted ‘Glory, Hallelujah’ at them?”<sup>1</sup>

After World War 1, Ulery questioned the idea that those who had given their lives in the war had done anything to establish democracy or hasten the coming of Christ’s kingdom.<sup>2</sup> Ulery challenged the basis for that very popular war.

Before World War II, O. B. Ulery and C. N. Hostetter, Jr., sent to President Roosevelt a “Memorial and Declaration of Nonresistance.” Ulery carried on conversations with evangelical leaders who insisted all patriots had a responsibility to defend their country. His views against participation in war were summarized in a pamphlet titled, “Can a Christian Fight?” which contains a “blistering attack on those ministers and magazines who encourage young men to fight. As chair of the our Brethren in Christ Peace, Relief and Service Committee, Ulery lobbied in Washington for exemption of young men from the draft during the Second World War.<sup>3</sup>

The Brethren in Christ message of nonresistance taught by O. B. Ulery was particularly attractive to my father. His conversion to the peace position led my Dad to refuse to make war products on his machine in the factory during World War II. He was hated for his stand against that war—the war most often has used today to support the just war theory.

I took up my father’s peace witness during the Vietnam conflict. I submitted conscientious objector papers to my draft board when I turned 18. Recently I reminisced with my cousin about our experience with Draft Board #13 in Springfield, Ohio, which was written up in those years in *Look* magazine as an example of our outdated selected service system.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> E. Morris Sider, *Nine Portraits: Brethren in Christ Bibliographical Sketches* (Nappanee, IN: Evangel Press, 330.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 330-331.

<sup>4</sup> Anthony Wolff, “Draft Board No. 13, Springfield, Ohio,” *LOOK Magazine*, April 2, 1968, 28-32.

I remember vividly my meeting with that group of old men on my draft board, who were suspicious of us young “draft-dodgers.” That board never granted conscientious objector status to anyone during any war, and my request was rejected unanimously so that I had no appeal.

While I was deferred as a student, I attended Messiah College where my opposition to war was nourished by Brethren in Christ faculty like Carlton Wittlinger, Martin Schrag, and Morris Sider. Yet, when my student deferment ran out, because I crammed four years of college into five years, I was classified 1-A and ordered to report for induction into the United States Army. I went for my military physical, prepared to step out of line and refuse induction. It never came to that, because I was surprisingly informed by the clerk of my draft board about a 1-SC student classification that would last until the end of the academic year, when I was enrolled in seminary.

In seminary I circulated a petition against the Vietnam conflict in the Presbyterian Church where I served, attended an event in the Princeton University Chapel when students voted to go on strike in protest of President Nixon’s invasion of Cambodia, and was present on another occasion in Princeton Seminary Chapel where a student burned his draft card. I did not strike, nor did I burn my draft card, yet I was sympathetic with this secular anti-war movement although my position had different roots. I have always considered myself a biblical pacifist.

During seminary, I was tempted to leave my peace church to become a minister in the Presbyterian Church. I’ll always be grateful to Bishop Charlie Byers for staying close to me and even visiting us in Princeton.

After seminary, Bishop Byers convinced the board of the Fairland Church (Cleona, PA) to accept this 25-year-old seminary graduate to be the only pastor of a congregation with about 200 regular worship attenders. My first year at the congregation, I invited the peace team from Messiah College to conduct a Sunday evening service, during which one of the students advocated voting for the peace candidate—George McGovern. I doubt she convinced anyone in that staunchly conservative community. Some of the members of the Fairland Church were not happy with this peace team from our denomination’s college, but fortunately they did not translate that dislike to me, and I had a rewarding five-year pastorate at Fairland.

After attending graduate school, I taught for 33 years at Messiah College. During that time, I went to Washington to lobby on behalf of the

Peace Tax Fund, which would allow biblical pacifists to redirect their tax money from the military budget. Surprisingly, the conservative Republican Representative Bill Goodling from our district said he would not vote against the Peace Tax Fund because of the many peace churches in his constituency.

I believe my upbringing among the Brethren in Christ and my experience at Princeton Seminary were ideal preparation for teaching at Messiah College, sponsored by our historic peace church. My peace testimony was welcomed by the college and at least tolerated by students.

After a teaching career at Messiah College, I spent the last five years at the Grantham Church. In a sense, I believe that my entire career was to prepare me for my ministry there, because in those years my peace witness moved from the political to the interpersonal and even the spiritual. In a congregation that was torn by strife, Bishop Ken Hoke called me to bring peace, first as an interim preacher and then as senior pastor. This was a far greater test of my peace witness than the Vietnam Conflict. Here biblical pacifism was put to the test in interpersonal relationships within the Grantham Church and in its witness to the community.

At Grantham, I humbly believe that God called me to be a peacemaker so that God could bring healing and wholeness. I watched as God miraculously worked through too many situations to describe here to bring healing and prepare the congregation to grow remarkably in the last year under the leadership of Pastor David Flowers.

Peace churches must do more than renounce war; they are called to witness to the world about the peace that God can bring between people. God has done that in the last five years at the Grantham Church, and I have been blessed to watch God at work.

Indeed, I am greatly blessed to be the product of an Anabaptist peace church. But that is not all that the Brethren in Christ is. We are also a holiness church, and I was nurtured in one of the hot beds of holiness—Beulah Chapel in Springfield, Ohio.

Here again the story begins with my father. He grew up in a family where alcohol was a problem. Men in the family worked hard all week and then got drunk on Friday only to sober up on Sunday afternoon and return to work on Monday morning.

My cousin said that when she and her brother went home on Friday night, if there was a light in the house, they went over and slept at Grandma's



house. My cousin affirmed: life in her house was hell on weekends. On one occasion, my cousin looked at me sternly and said: “John, we have an alcohol problem in our family.”

My father grew up in that alcohol-ridden family, so holiness was very attractive to him. My father’s mentor, O. B. Ulery, was a champion of second work holiness throughout his ministry as a Brethren in Christ bishop, pastor, and evangelist; as the denomination’s general secretary; and as the publisher of the church paper, the *Evangelical Visitor*.

Morris Sider’s biography of Bishop O.B. Ulery includes the following quotation:

Sanctification...was his favorite subject in preaching: no matter on what topic he commenced to speak he would eventually work into his sermon something on the doctrine. He took what he himself called a “very radical” view of sanctification.... he described the act as a second definite, instantaneous work of grace subsequent to justification.... When the seeker “fully and irrevocably consecrates himself to God as a living sacrifice,” he is delivered from the inbred sin (the carnal mind) and the “old man” is put off. In his stead comes the Holy Spirit to baptize and fill the heart. This “indwelling Spirit” then becomes “teacher, guide, revealer, preserver... and supplies wisdom, strength, grace, joy, peace, and glory.”<sup>5</sup>

As a proponent of holiness, my father’s mentor, O. B. Ulery, was thrilled when he heard a holiness camp was to be launched at Roxbury. He gave a liberal financial gift, preached the dedication sermon, built one of the first cottages—Beulah Cottage—and served as the Bible teacher at the camp every year except one when sickness prevented him. Among Ulery’s last acts was laying the cement blocks for the first building and preaching the dedication sermon for Memorial Holiness Camp in southern Ohio.<sup>6</sup>

As a child, I attended Memorial Holiness Camp Meeting every summer. My parents talked often about Roxbury, so I was in awe when one year, we came to the legendary Roxbury Holiness Camp. Many Brethren in Christ have attended Roxbury annually as part of their summer vacation. How they put up with the sweltering Pennsylvania heat in August has always been mystifying to me, especially before air conditioning.

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<sup>5</sup> Sider, 319.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 328.

At Memorial Holiness Camp where I attended, the preaching style varied. There were the guilt-inducing messages of William Rosenberry; the sermons of his brother John, punctuated with his running the front of the church, jumping the altar rail, and once even vaulting the pulpit; the scary stories of Harry Hock's time with gangsters in Detroit; the inspiring stories from the life of Henry Ginder; the explanations of holiness from the more cerebral Luke Keefer, Sr.; and the accent of Charlie Byers that I could never place—not Pennsylvania Dutch, but what was it?

I remember the altar calls with appeals that motivated my friends to flock to the front, where there was crying for sin and shouting when the seeker prayed through. As exciting as those altar services were, I learned to resist the invitation, in order to spend time with my friends at the snack bar after church, where small glass containers of ice tea and pints of ice cream cut in half were more attractive than weeping at a mourner's bench.

I remember fun times in the children's camp with teacher Pearl Wolgemuth and chorister Avis Brumbaugh. Sister Pearl did Christian magic, once administering black disappearing ink to my white shirt, which I wore around camp so all could see my sin-stained shirt become white as snow.

Experiences at Memorial Holiness Camp were mirrored in my home congregation. Pastor Dale Ulery shouted when people were delivered from sin. When I preached at Roxbury, John Rosenberry introduced me with the story of my mother playing the organ, getting blessed, leaving the organ to circle the church shouting, only to arrive back at the organ bench and continue playing.

And we Brethren in Christ have carried this holiness message to the ends of the earth. When we were in a church in the suburbs of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, my wife Amy and I with a translator were crammed into a bench that was already full. As we sat on that uncomfortable bench, I heard the children in another part of the church singing the old camp-meeting song: "O, I never shall forget how the fire fell, how the fire fell, how the fire fell; O, I never shall forget how the fire fell when the Lord sanctified me."

Although it did not happen at Memorial Holiness Camp, I did witness to an experience of sanctification, at the end of a regular service under the preaching of my childhood pastor Owen Alderfer. Owen also baptized me in a stream behind the Osterlan Home in Springfield, Ohio, and Owen was the department chair when I first came to teach at Messiah College. Owen

helped me to deal with my ambivalence regarding holiness.

Indeed, I must admit that my observations of second work holiness have been mixed. Holiness seemed to work for my father. I am blessed to have had a father who modeled a holy life. I observed him at home, and for five summers worked with my father in a factory. He lived what he professed, at home and at the factory with his fellow workers. He did not wear his plain coat on the job, but they knew of his commitment. I cannot really think of much to criticize in my father.

Nevertheless, I do not think holiness was good for my mother. She was quite introspective and spiritually sensitive about her relationship with God and other people. She prayed for missionaries, taught a Sunday School class for teenage girls, and was deeply devoted to her Brethren in Christ Church. Yet, holiness seemed to instill in her anxiety rather than peace.

When I shared my love/hate relationship with second work holiness with Owen Alderfer, he said: "This second work of grace may have its theological problems, but we holiness people are not comfortable with sin, and we believe that it is important to live a holy life." He was right. I was told that my Baptist great-grandfather used to say, "I sin every day in thought word and deed, but I am 'borned again' and on my way to heaven." We holiness people believe the eternal security Baptists are too comfortable with sin. As much as we fail and even fall into sin, our goal is holy living.

So, we Brethren in Christ are people of peace and holiness. I have recounted how this unique combination of beliefs has influenced me. Peace and holiness have been central to our church throughout its history and are also relevant today. When violent language is a regular part of political speech and actual violence is in the news daily, we need the Brethren in Christ message of peace. At this time of disregard for truth and moral values, the world needs the Brethren in Christ message of holiness. Our somewhat unique combination of peace and holiness makes the Brethren in Christ Church relevant in the twenty-first century.

## Book Reviews

MOLLY WORTHEN. *Apostles of Reason: The Crisis of Authority in American Evangelicalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014. Pp. 352. \$27.95 (US)

Reviewed by Ronald Burwell\*

Molly Worthen has written a wide ranging intellectual history of American evangelicalism that covers the last 70 years. She suggests that her goal is to create a “. . . portrait of evangelical intellectual life that is broader and more diverse than we have seen before” (5). In order to do this, she has cast her net to include a multitude of traditions, institutions and individuals in her narrative.

According to Worthen, evangelicals have struggled to answer three basic questions: how can we have knowledge that is both rational and spiritual; how can one find salvation and a true relationship with God; and how can Christians maintain personal belief and still operate in a secular public square (4). The overarching thesis that seeks to pull all this together is the idea that evangelicals are searching for some sort of foundational authority that will enable them to truly understand the world. Worthen’s thesis has some affinities with Christian Smith (*The Bible Made Impossible*). Smith contends that the “Biblicism” of evangelicals is an attempt to find authority for Christian faith and practice. Both Worthen and Smith conclude that this search has not been successful and that evangelicals are still searching for such an authority.

The book is divided into three sections that might roughly correspond to the three questions that she has identified. The first section, “Knights Inerrant,” examines the struggle of evangelicals to defend the notion of biblical inerrancy as a way of finding a sure foundation of knowledge. In the process, she covers topics such as the formation of Fuller seminary, the work of Carl Henry, the establishment of the National Association of Evangelicals and the founding of the magazine *Christianity Today*. Her view is that by adopting inerrancy and a version of Scottish commonsense realism evangelicals thought it might be possible to solve the authority problem.

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The second section, “To Evangelize the World” looks at a variety of movements and people that are focused on mission seeking to present the gospel in different ways and in different places. Along the way Worthen manages to write about Bible colleges, Jesus People, the Vineyard movement and various renewal movements. She even spends time on evangelicals’ discovery of the merits of anthropology as a discipline providing theoretical foundations for the church growth movement.

The final section, “Let Them Have Dominion,” picks up topics such as various types of evangelical social action movements including Jim Wallis and the evangelical “left,” feminism, and Restorationism. This part of the book also devotes space to so-called evangelical gurus including people like James Dobson, Bill Gothard, Hal Lindsay, and Francis Schaeffer.

Within this book there are a number of topics of interest to Brethren in Christ people. Worthen sees American evangelicalism as strongly impacted by people and institutions that are largely reformed in their character. However, she finds a number of interesting interactions between evangelicals and non-reformed groups such as Anabaptists, Wesleyans, and Pentecostals. She mentions C.N. Hostetter and notes that John Howard Yoder corresponded with him regarding issues related to the National Association of Evangelicals. The book has a number of items regarding John Howard Yoder and his interactions with a variety of evangelical leaders including Carl Henry and Kenneth Kantzer. Apparently Kantzer and Yoder developed a friendship while at the University of Basel studying under Karl Barth. Worthen also discusses some of the debates among Mennonites about the wisdom of establishing a seminary. Harold Bender argued in favor of a seminary but there was fear about an “overeducated ministry” (51).

Another Brethren in Christ person that is mentioned in this book is Ronald J. Sider. Worthen mentions Sider as part of her discussion of social action movements. She notes how his work with Messiah College students at the Philadelphia campus was helpful in inspiring him to write *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* (183).

What is remarkable about *Apostles of Reason* is the sheer number of topics that Worthen addresses. In that sense, I would concur that the author was definitely successful in meeting her goal of providing a broad and diverse history of the last 70 years of evangelicalism. In

addition, one can't help but be impressed with the scholarship that went into gathering all of this information. The list of resources in the bibliography and the interviews that were conducted reflect the fact that a significant amount of time and effort went into creating this book.

On the other hand, it may also be the case that this attempt to cover such a vast range of topics is also one of weaknesses of the book. When one reads the book, it is hard not to feel almost overwhelmed with the number of topics the author tries to address. There is a feeling of having an immense amount of data dumped on the reader with a lack of clarity as to what this all means. While fascinating in the details, the reader is sometimes left wondering how this all fits together. Worthen's attempt to provide an integrative thesis, in this reviewer's estimation, fails. While I do believe that Worthen is correct in that evangelicals have sought for some sort of authoritative basis for knowledge, I do not believe she is correct in seeing this as unique or even central to the identity of being evangelical. While she notes that others also share this quest for authority ("These are problems of intellectual and spiritual authority. None, on its own, is unique to evangelicals"), she also sees this as creating a "distinctive spiritual community" (4). I would rather argue that evangelicals share with other moderns the yearning for some sort of basis of epistemological certainty. In that sense, they are hardly unique or different from many other communities that also search for intellectual authority.

Whatever the flaws of this book might be, I would highly recommend this book to anyone seeking to understand the history of American evangelicalism over the last 70 years.

A personal note: Because I am a "cradle evangelical" (i.e., one born and raised in the evangelical tradition) I greatly enjoyed reading this book. Many of the people and places mentioned in this book intersect with my life. I am the product of evangelical institutions (Wheaton College and Trinity Evangelical Divinity School). My college peers were the children of evangelical luminaries like Carl Henry, Billy Graham and Harold Lindsell. People like Kenneth Kantzer and others had a formative role in my intellectual growth and I owe them a debt of gratitude. At the same time, I am glad to be part of the Brethren in Christ which helps me see both the positive aspects and also some of the problems with American evangelicalism.

## BOOK REVIEWS

E. MORRIS SIDER. *Living Simply, Giving Generously: A Biography of David and Jeannie Byer*. Grantham, PA: Brethren in Christ Historical Society, 2015. Pp. 208. \$15.00 (U.S.)

Reviewed by Michael R. Brown\*

Unusual enough for the Historical Society, the subjects of this biography are not Brethren in Christ—officially, that is; but by background, principles, engagement, and support, very much so. David Byer, a son of the Pleasant Hill (Kansas) congregation, had a long career as an anesthesiologist at Mayo Clinic. Jeannie (Jordan) Byer, a South Sudan missionary kid, has flourished as a registered nurse and mother of six. Together both have lived unusually generous lives, contributing much to Brethren in Christ missions and education along the way.

This is neither your usual comprehensive biography, nor the usual scholarly work of Morris Sider. Nor was it meant to be. Very intentionally, David and Jeannie have “live[d] simply in order to give generously,” (ix) and as the introduction explains, the main purpose of this book is to present these lives in order “to spread abroad this principle” (ix). Sponsored by the Friends of Murray Library, Messiah College, the book was also written to recognize the Byers’ contributions to the Ruth E. Engle Memorial Collection of Children’s Book Illustration. To appeal to a wide audience, Sider has kept it short and has limited the documentation.

Sider presents chapters on the family history and youth of each partner; coming together; medical training and careers; service in Ethiopia and the Brethren in Christ mission in Zambia; civic, church, and home life; and contributions to Messiah College. Also included are sections on their annual service trips to Africa and their many American and international friends, plus 28 black and white photographs.

Then follow four appendixes: Jeannie’s account of the family’s trip through Europe in 1988; David’s reflections on his struggle with depression around 1995; curator Cherie Fieser’s history of the Byers’ delightful engagement with the Engle Memorial Collection; and last, 17 color photos of the artworks sponsored by the Byers family.

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\* Michael R. Brown served as a librarian at Messiah College from 1973-2006. He and his wife now live in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, where they attend Gehman Mennonite Church.

The presentation is thematic rather than chronological, a portrayal of two lives united by a common interest in helping all sorts of people. However, we do get an historical overview of David's Brethren in Christ heritage, his father and California mother, and his childhood and youth. Appropriately, quite a bit is presented about David's professional work at the Mayo Clinic and in Africa. Along the way, we also learn of his wide reading and ecumenical bent and his surprising interests in street lights and local politics.

Jeannie's story is nicely balanced with David's—a tricky thing to manage in a dual biography where lives are inextricably bound together and the husband has the more prominent career. While Sider understandably provides less information about Jeannie's heritage than David's, he naturally gives more about her exotic missionary childhood. Thereafter we read of her demanding nursing schedules, her gathering and organizing of medical supplies for missions, and her engineering of many trips, especially that trek through Europe with six children ages 5 to 18. And running through all this, we get an occasional inkling of the work of motherhood and hospitality for many long- and short-term house guests.

The themes of frugal living, liberal giving, and committed service are well illustrated by many anecdotes, a nice mix of the humorous and the horrendous. Among them are stories of their medical service in Ethiopia and Zambia; adoption *by* grandmother Bina Ezra and *of* daughter Salina Sikalima; taking children's books to Macha; their duct-taped used cars and for-loan missionary cars; and hospitality to students from Zambia, Poland, China, Laos, Brazil, Japan, Canada, and Iran. Two telling examples are Jeannie rescuing a distraught Chinese student (99) and David's visiting patients' families "at the fires" at Macha Hospital (74). Troubles and regrets are not kept out of the record: a dark period of dealing with drug abuse in the family, David's depression, severe illness endured by both David and Jeannie.

The appendixes, more than mere add-ons, present aspects of the Byer's lives best told by themselves and Cherie Fieser, and they also support Sider's themes of exemplary living. Jeannie's travelogue shows her resourcefulness and innate good humor as well as family cohesion. David's essay on his depression, included at his insistence, reveals his solid faith and persevering character. Fieser's account about the Engle Memorial Collection and the pictures that follow, while showcasing this



little-known treasure of Messiah College, primarily display the Byers' altruistic involvement in yet another area of interest.

This book is a tribute, not an exhaustive biography, but a short chronology (another appendix?) would perhaps have satisfied some readers' curiosity, e.g., what exactly are the Byers' birthdates? when and how long were their later visits to Zambia? Similarly, regarding places, more exactness is desired about the locations of Jeannie's childhood in Sudan, the couple's medical work in Ethiopia, and the famed Macha mission. Place is essential to story, and a reader should be able to use his atlas.

Only one factual error was detected, and that the fault of this reviewer: David's one year at Upland College did not intersect with Mike Brown's two. Two minor technical slips: a missing n in "two Africa countries" (56); a rule broken in "David [read David's] and Jeannie's Parents" (118). One *faux pas*: although they may illustrate something of David's first encounter with different cultures, his quips about African cooking pots and cannibals and dippy, whiny Arabic music ought to be expunged (p. 50).

But these matters are mentioned mainly to follow review requirements for something to criticize. Sider's aim to promote the Byers' lifestyle principles is well met, and by means of his biography the reader finds it a pleasure to learn to know this warm-hearted, venturesome pair.

GREGORY A. BOYD. *The Myth of a Christian Nation: How the Quest for Political Power is Destroying the Church*. Zondervan, 2007. 224 pages. \$12.57 (U.S.)

Reviewed by Tracie M. Hunter\*

In addition to being a pastor, I am a politician and elected official. I consider my first and highest calling to be my spiritual calling as pastor; this vocation comes before my governmental office as judge. I admit that at times the two offices have raised challenges and conflicts for me. For example, the United States Supreme Court's ruling legalizing gay marriage has called forth my utmost reliance on God to resolve.

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As a Christian with expressed Democratic leanings, I have often been disturbed by the notion that Republicans have the corner on godly values, that Republicans share Christian values, morals and beliefs, while Democrats do not. As a pro-life, pro-marriage Christian, I am both challenged and disturbed that Democrats are categorically labeled as proponents of all things liberal.

Greg Boyd's *The Myth of a Christian Nation* makes poignantly clear that my faith and strict adherence to the Bible as my ultimate source of truth conflicts with platforms of both Democrats and Republicans. The reality is that my political leanings have more to do with my racial identity and the challenges I face as an African-American woman, whose issues are usually addressed better by one political party. However, as *The Myth* highlights Jesus' avoidance of political engagement, I appreciate the author's views of Jesus' focus on ministry, not politics.

I plan to recommend Boyd's book to my evangelical friends and clergy in other denominations who fit the prototype of believers who equate their political underpinnings with their faith. They erroneously believe that their faith and politics are identical. I have had many debates over the years about the notion that somehow patriotism and Christianity are interchangeable.

This book could not be more clear and accurate in pointing out the fallacies of such beliefs. It is refreshing to finally have a white pastor point out how offensive it is to call for a return to the Christianity of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and others slave owners who routinely raped African-American women and sold their children away. This book touched home for me when I can't trace my family tree because my ancestors were slaves and were given the surnames of their slave masters. My mother recently told me that one of her great grandfathers had two different surnames for the two different plantations he lived on, making it nearly impossible for my family to discover our history beyond a few generations.

When a conservative Christian suggests that we must take America back or make America great again, I can't help but wonder whether they really mean the restoration of Jim Crow, black codes, riding on the back

of the bus, and denial of a right to vote, if not slavery itself. All of these realities, which mar very recent American history, do not reflect Christ to me at all.

This book is important because it acknowledges the failure of most Christian theologians to be honest about the violent history of Christianity and its failure to reflect the New Testament nature of Jesus. I laughed and almost cried to finally read a book that did not gloss over the brutal truth that the many facets of racism, which continue today, are directly opposed to the Kingdom of God as Jesus taught. This book gave me hope that one day my fellow white Christians will understand why some black people reject the idea that America was founded on Christian principles.

Boyd's discussion of the various wars that America has engaged in, based on the Constantinian ideology that somehow God is more with Americans than with other peoples, was eye-opening. Although I was raised as a devout Catholic, I was glad to read that during the violent conquests promoted by most religions, the Anabaptists, the root of the denomination I now claim as my own, did not murder in the name of Jesus.

Throughout the book, Boyd emphasizes the concept of "power over" versus "power under," the sword versus the cross, and the Kingdom of God versus the kingdom of the world. He declares that the Kingdom of God relies strictly on Jesus. He dispels the notion that the world's problems can be solved by participation in the political system, an understanding with which I agree. However, I also believe that without the participation of the Kingdom of God in the systems of this world, we are more doomed as a nation and there is no hope of justice for the disenfranchised of this world.

Contrary to Boyd's claim, I believe that by entering the political arena I am able to effectuate change in a system I know first-hand treats the disenfranchised peoples of this world unjustly and inequitably. The only way I can change the system is to be in a position to exercise godly influence in an arena that is otherwise diabolically opposed to everything I biblically and spiritually represent and believe. While Boyd presents the near impossibility to change the kingdoms of the world, I still believe it is better to be a part of the political system than to be completely separate.

I also wonder about the author's claim that we should love

everyone unconditionally. I don't believe that God called us to do so. Jesus said to love our enemies and pray for them. Boyd defines neighbor as anyone in need, and while I would help my political foes if they were hurt or give them food if they were hungry, I don't think that intentionally making myself subservient to them would further the cause of Christianity or change their hearts. My experience has been that bullies don't get nicer when their victims submit to their bullying, but bully harder. Jesus was not a doormat. Jesus whipped moneychangers out of the temple and called the Pharisees and Sadducees "vipers." Those words do not sound at all like a subservient man, as the author suggests, but rather a confrontational, assertive, fearless man on a mission for his Father.

As a pacifist like Boyd, I don't subscribe to the ideology of "an eye for an eye," nor do I believe in using any form of violence against others. I don't own guns, but I believe that there must be limits to how far we allow people to harm us. Christians are too often taken advantage of because we appear weak; therefore, I don't agree with Boyd's assertion that exercising "power under" toward people who are determined to harm us leads them toward righteousness.

I agree with the author that this seemingly passive message of "power under" poses a dilemma for Christians, especially when we are faced with issues such as the use of violence in self-defense. Having personally witnessed the effects in my community of gun violence, I know the violence must be stopped. I believe that only the Kingdom of God and the message of the cross provide the answer, but this answer must be demonstrated in power, not in passivity. As Boyd points out, the kingdom of the world can't respond with warm fuzzies if attacked.

I submit that a balance between "power over" and "power under" is essential. Boyd doesn't provide a middle ground. I don't think "bleeding" for our enemies is the only solution, especially when our enemies' purpose is to draw blood. Jesus already bled and died for all humankind and our dying to self does not require our physical blood too. I do believe, with Boyd, that complete reliance on God through the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus told the disciples he would send as our comforter and teacher, will enable us to respond with righteousness when faced with situations that might warrant a violent, radical response.

## BOOK REVIEWS

MARY ANN LOEWEN. *Sons and Mothers: Stories from Mennonite Men*. Saskatchewan, Canada. University of Regina Press, 2015. pp. 144. \$17.61 (CDN.)

Reviewed by Mark Keller\*

*Sons and Mothers: Stories from Mennonite Men* is a compilation of written reflections by 13 academic and artistic Canadian men about their mothers. The editor, Mary Ann Loewen, notes in the introduction to her book (x), a question raised in the introduction to the book *Mothering Mennonite*, edited by Rachel Epp Buller and Kerry Fast. The question, "... but have men had a similar opportunity [to write about their mothers]? The answer, as far as the editor knew, was no." Loewen then decided to take up the "challenge of crossing the gender/generation divide and allow men to share their stories about their Mennonite mothers" (x).

I have concluded, after reading Loewen's book and having grown up in the Anabaptist Brethren in Christ Church culture, that these Mennonite writings about mothers by their sons would be stories equally representative of many Brethren in Christ male experiences. As a Mennonite pastor privileged to listen to many persons tell life accounts, I find Loewen's book yet another opportunity to enter others' sacred stories. These stories can provide insights and invitations, for both listeners and readers, to reflect on our own life journeys.

Perhaps nearly all persons, no matter the cultural background, will resonate with Loewen's statement, "We tell our stories in order to make sense of our lives, and we read the stories of others in order to know and understand what it is to be human ..." (xi). The 13 compiled stories are written by men uniquely gifted in putting into words the experiences, thoughts, and emotions many men hold but are often uncomfortable with or unable to bring into the open for examination. Inevitably readers will find themselves going back to their own life stories and asking questions about how they were impacted by their mothers.

The 13 different accounts are uniquely personal to the authors. As I read each story, I found myself wanting to know more about the

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writer's background. Knowing more, I might have better understood the writer's reasoning for the narrative he holds of his mother. However, the reader must turn to the back of the book to find a brief alphabetized biography of each writer. I found myself wanting the narrative and the author's biography closer together within the book. The biographical information intensified the impact of the author's story.

The diversity of themes found in these life stories will likely cause a reader to identify more closely with a particular author's account due to his own life experience. For instance, my own life experience included powerfully voiced spiritual reality filled with fearful warnings. Nathan Klippenstein writes in "Open Gates," "We were constantly [my emphasis] reminded to gird ourselves with spiritual weaponry lest the devil enter through a side door, disguised as something we might actually enjoy" (46).

For some, poverty, tragedy, and turmoil filled part of a mother's life. How did mothers seem to deal with these events and what were the effects passed onto the sons? Howard Dyck, in "Mary Dyck's Vicarious Life," caused me some sadness for my own mother's journey; her early days were difficult, though not to the extent Mary Dyck suffered. "There was a tension in my mother's life arising from the gap separating the realities of her life from her unfulfilled dreams, which she harbored to her dying day" (96). My mother's credo was to "make the best of everything and not look back."

One writer's Mennonite mother did not fit easily into the church and religious community's social status and did not conform with ease to or identify with the modern era. Paul Tiessen, in "Things My Friends Did Not Know about My Mom," wrote: "The Mennonites she encountered there emphasized solid performances of various kinds of "worldly" achievement: they focused on a certain degree of material well-being, and she sensed that they were uncomfortable with displays of failure and loss and breakdown" (11-12).

How did some mothers and sons talk about sexuality (if they did)? Did mothers in previous times face different complexities around the issue of sexuality than exist today? In an informal discussion of long-time church friends with their mothers, Lukas Thiessen writes, "...I have learned that the church community's position on dating and sexuality has changed over time" (75). "They [the gathered Mennonite

mothers] also recalled how those activities [a church rock band, and other questionable activities] were suddenly curtailed when a Christian revival came through southern Manitoba” (76-77).

If it is true we live by stories passed on to us, mothers contribute formative narratives that profoundly shape sons’ lives. Loewen’s book provides material to stimulate readers to better contemplate who they are. Readers may put into better perspective that today’s individual, church, and family issues are not something new. Out of these stories of mothers and sons comes a deeper recognition that world events, individual decisions, and church influence combined with local culture are powerful forces affecting individuals and families. Responses to these forces are a combination of various influences and mothers play a large part in influencing their sons’ (and daughters’!) life trajectories.

DAVID L. WEAVER-ZERCHER. *Martyrs Mirror: A Social History*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2016. Pp. 440. \$49.95 (U.S.)

Reviewed by Brooke Strayer\*

David Weaver-Zercher completed an impressive undertaking in writing *Martyrs Mirror: A Social History*: a three-part book detailing Anabaptist history and the significance of a book dedicated to describing the stories of martyrs from the crucifixion of Jesus until the seventeenth century. Weaver-Zercher laid an important foundation in detailing the historical context of the sixteenth century, which led to the emergence of a new group within Christianity, the Anabaptists. Born out of the Protestant Reformation, Anabaptists hoped to take reforms further with core tenants being adult baptism and a stance of nonresistance. And the community paid a price for these seemingly heretical beliefs. They were “condemned by Protestants and Catholics alike” and “suffered a level of judicial persecution that outpaced the persecution of all other religious groups in sixteenth-century Europe” (16). Pointing to the persistence of

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persecution, Weaver-Zercher cites data that the number of Anabaptists persecuted represented ten percent of all Christians executed within the first five years of the movement (17).

Thieleman van Braght produced the first edition of the *Martyrs Mirror* in the Netherlands in 1660, a time when persecution among Dutch Anabaptists had dwindled and the community enjoyed more wealth and social prestige. Van Braght wanted to remind his fellow members of their humble beginnings. Numerous reprints, revisions, and translations of this beloved book ensued, cementing the importance of historical memory within the Anabaptist community.

A treasure trove of information and knowledge fills the pages of *Martyrs Mirror: A Social History*. A novice in Anabaptist history and tradition can read this book and come away with an understanding of the chronology of a movement bred by a few “radical” people who wanted to take the life and teachings of Jesus seriously. Weaver-Zercher painstakingly combed through primary sources producing a detailed historiography. The first two parts of the book resemble a typical text one might find in a college history classroom. Certainly, not everyone has the appetite for reading two hundred pages of historical records. Indeed, even people who have a love and appreciation for history can at times become overwhelmed as a result of the sheer amount of information contained within the pages. Additionally, the first two parts may be redundant for someone well versed in Anabaptist history. For those who find themselves in this camp, skim the historiography but recognize the potential of learning new information. Weaver-Zercher deserves credit for the time and effort spent on putting together a concise timeline of five centuries of material, as evident by the excellent notes and citations found at the end of the book.

While the historiography does not necessarily contribute anything new for Anabaptist scholarship, the last section of the book, “Contemporary Approaches to Martyrs Mirror,” adds new and exciting knowledge. Academics and lay people alike will find the contents valuable as Anabaptists continually wrestle with tension of honoring tradition in the midst of continual assimilation into broader culture, more so by certain Anabaptist groups. In North America, the martyrology became “a history book, an instruction manual, an heirloom, and an icon” (146). The first-hand accounts of men and women in recent centuries,



particularly tradition-minded Anabaptists, growing up with the *Martyrs Mirror* add a special significance in the book. This section recognizes the effect and power of a book detailing martyrdom in Medieval Europe in the twenty-first century. Contemporary descendants of the Anabaptists identify themes from the *Martyrs Mirror* and discuss their relevance today. For example, the stance of nonresistance found throughout the martyrology intersects with one of the main pillars of Anabaptist theology today, raising questions about moves from traditional conscientious objection to war to increased participation in social activism. “The martyr memory might renew a ‘weary and uncertain people,’” Weaver-Zercher suggests (240). No doubt, the readership of the *Martyrs Mirror* declined over the centuries; however, to say it is no longer effective or relevant for Anabaptists today would be a falsehood, as Weaver-Zercher illustrates over and over again.

The importance of this book should not be lost on the Brethren in Christ Church, a denomination with theological ties to Anabaptism. How does the denomination honor the memory of the martyrs today? What can members learn from them and how do we apply these practical lessons in life? David Weaver-Zercher’s work points to the larger context of conversation happening within Anabaptists communities around the globe. Without a doubt, Anabaptist martyrdom shaped and formed the movement from the sixteenth century to the present, and will continually insert its influence into the future.

AUGUST H. KONKEL. *1 & 2 Chronicles*. Believers Church Bible Commentary. Harrisonburg, Virginia and Kitchener, Ontario: Herald Press, 2016. Pp. 517 \$29.99 (USD)

Reviewed by Deborah Winters\*

August H. Konkel’s *1 & 2 Chronicles*, in the Believers Church Bible Commentary series, begins with an introduction describing Chronicles as an approach to historiography, and the communities, composition, goals, message, and the connection with the New Testament of these

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books. He also discusses the methodology and translations used within this commentary.

The commentary is then divided into seven sections: Part 1: Nation of Promise, 1 Chronicles 1:1-9:34; Part 2: Founding the Kingdom, 1 Chronicles 9:35-20:8; Part 3: Preparations for the Temple, 1 Chronicles 21:1-29:30; Part 4: The Reign of Solomon, 2 Chronicles 1:1-9:31; Part 5: Israel until the Exile of the North, 2 Chronicles 10:1-28:27; Part 6: Healing under Hezekiah, 2 Chronicles 29:1-32:33; and Part 7: Humiliation and Hope, 2 Chronicles 33:1-36:23.

The volume ends with an outline of 1 and 2 Chronicles, explanatory essays, maps of Palestine and the Ancient Near East, bibliography, selected resources, and an index of ancient sources.

The aim of *The Believers Church Bible Commentary* series is to provide a “new tool for basic Bible study” (15) so that those using this tool will be able “more fully to understand the original message of Scripture and its meaning for today” (15) with the guidance of the Holy Spirit as God still speaks to “all who will listen” (15).

The writers chosen for this series come from within the tradition informed by “Anabaptism, evangelicalism, or pietism” (16), although they hope that this series will be used by all Christians seeking an understanding of the Word. In the person of August H. Konkel, the series picked a scholar known for his work in Chronicles, who grew up in the Mennonite culture and, before his academic career, pastored a Mennonite church.

Konkel frames his study of Chronicles in light of his own family’s history of exile from the Ukraine, moving to a new start in Canada. Their survival enlightens his understanding of the “Chronicler’s story as a survivor of exile” (18). For him, Chronicles is a study of faith in how history writing teaches us about the past as well as informs our theology to be able to see how God is working in the present.

One of the main themes of Chronicles is how the Chronicler, who probably lived in the later days of the Persian Empire, examined Israel’s past for lessons on how to live in their present circumstances and give hope for their future: “The Chronicler is teaching his people about God and the way they may find God at work in their lives” (35).

The analogy is made throughout the book that just as the Chronicler studied the history of his own people to learn how to live in their

present-day circumstances, so too the Anabaptist-related churches can learn from a study of their own history how to live today.

Konkel explains that the Chronicler uses eschatological history, “a history *as it should have happened*, the history that God intended for his people” (251), the ideal Israel should have fulfilled (464). Konkel highlights throughout the book how New Testament themes align with Chronicles and calls Chronicles a which “contains more history than any other biblical book on how God worked amid his people through the centuries” (446).

Konkel does an excellent job of framing each chapter in the preview section using an analogy from today’s world to help the reader understand the scripture text, what it meant in its original context (covered in the “Explanatory Notes” and “The Text in Biblical Context” sections). In the closing section (“The Text in the Life of the Church”) he explains how the biblical text informs the life of the church today.

Throughout the commentary, I appreciated Konkel’s comparisons between Chronicles, and the books of 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings, especially the theological differences between them.

Konkel gives me some new concepts to consider as well as raising questions. For example, he defines Sabbath rest of the seventh day as a world without conflict (219). Is the creation of the world simply making order/peace out of conflict or is there more to it than that? In his explanation of King Asa’s commitment to God, he makes the statement, “But no spiritual commitment is without failure” (328). What does that say about Jesus and his spiritual commitment? And is it credible that Ahaz’s transgression of passing children through fire did not indicate child sacrifice, but rather child dedication to a deity? (374)

In an early “Text in the Life of the Church” section, “The Church among the Nations” (60), Konkel makes the analogy that during the days of the Chronicler, Israel was not “a significant political, social or spiritual force” (60), much like the church today is “politically marginalized and has no realistic strategies or positions capable of changing societies and civilizations. The church has no significance whatever among the power of nations. . . .The goal of the church is not to change the world, but to be present among all nations, faithful to the values and truths that are to represent the presence of God in

the world” (60-61). Does not that very presence change the world? Are Christians not called to be that presence, that salt, yeast, and light that affect/change and illuminate all that they touch?

One grammatical correction needed is on page 150: the second paragraph, second line, needs the word “of” added: “The failures of the Roman Church came to crisis with the protest of one (of [sic]) its own priests....”

On the whole, the objective of the commentary was met. Konkel’s explanations of the genealogies, history writing, and eschatological history for Chronicles are excellent as is his applying the themes of Chronicles to Anabaptist churches today. Although not the aim of this commentary series, I would appreciate seeing Konkel focus it further to help us understand what the Chronicler has to say to the personal struggles of Christians today.

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