

The ALLENTOWN CHURCH's 125 YEAR PASSION...*GOD'S GLORY*

By Ron W. Hoyle

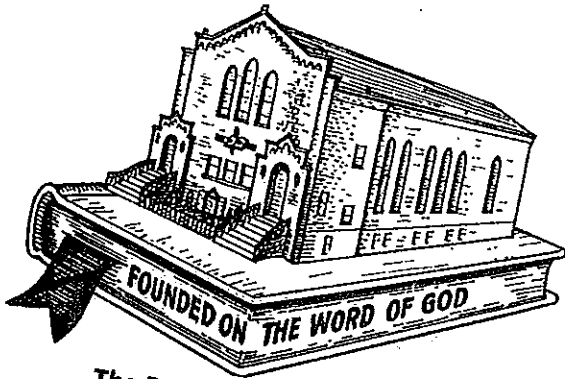
October 25, 2014



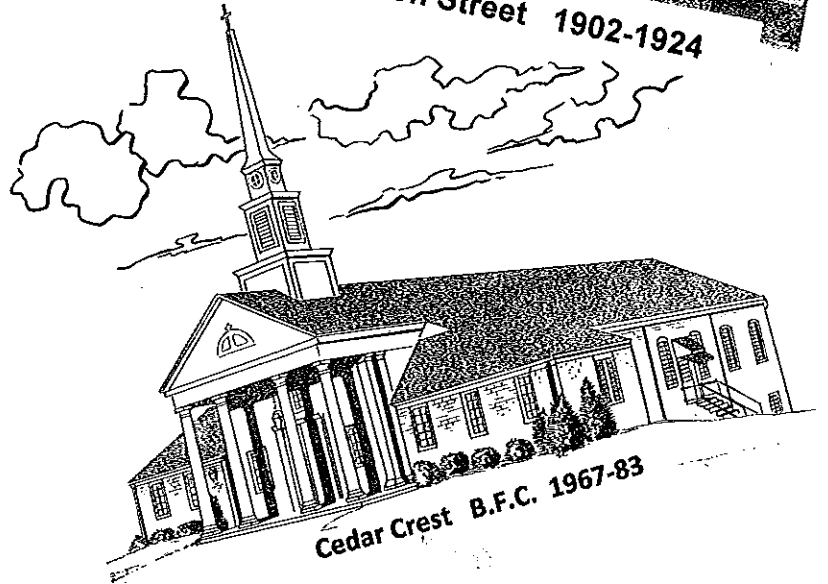
Faith Chapel 1889-1902



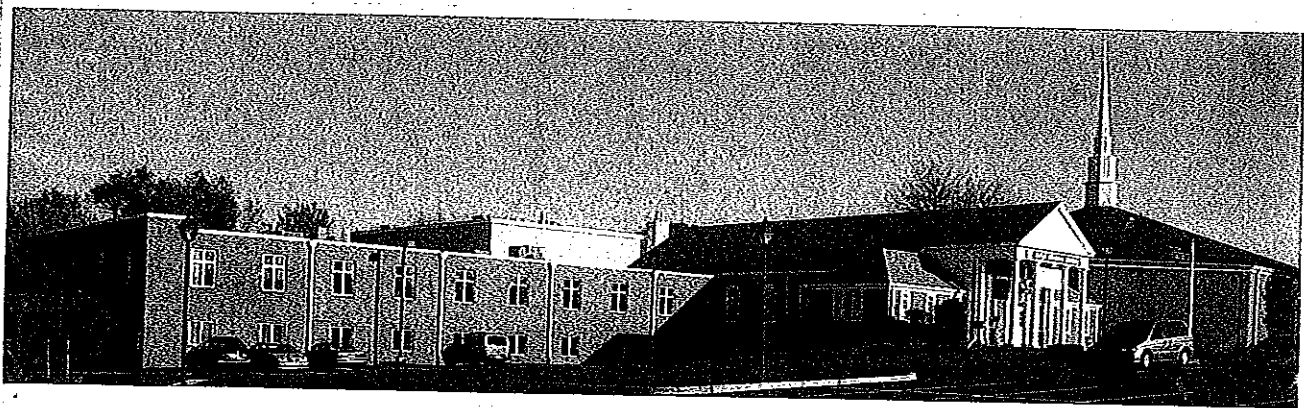
Gordon Street 1902-1924



The Radio Church 1924-81



Cedar Crest B.F.C. 1967-83



Presented to the Historical Society of the Bible Fellowship Church in Allentown

Mennonite Brethren in Christ records indicate that after a few false starts in the 1870's and 1880's a "class" was established in Allentown, population 25,000, in 1889. A nucleus of 12 "Dutch"-speaking believers led by Brother W.B. Musselman purchased a lot 40' x 110' at 816 Gordon St. There they constructed a frame building^a (24 x 30 ft) on the back of the lot (because they expected to grow), calling it Faith Chapel with a capacity of 125. Amenities in the church yard included a well, horse sheds, and a privy.



W. B. Musselman family, ca 1890



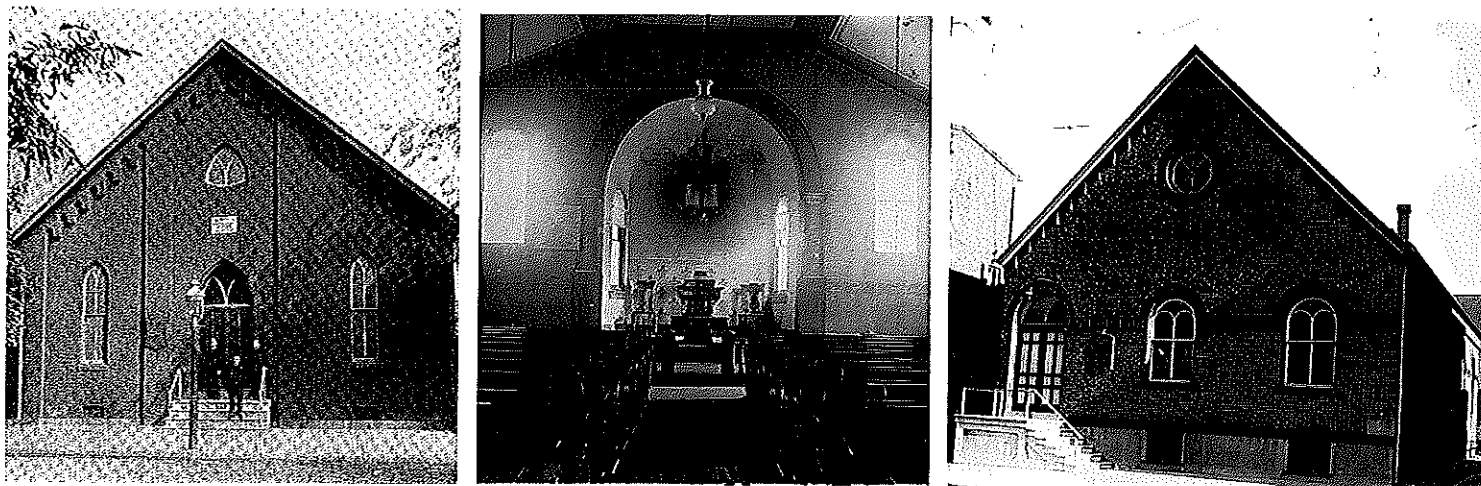
Membership stood at 54 in 1891 (with 150 registered baptisms in the first 10 yrs.) By 1892 leadership was handed over to fledging inexperienced self-taught pastors who were all helped by laymen who had migrated to the city from the Zionsville country church. These plain people with their fervent love of the Savior were hearing sermons in German and singing without hymn-books or accompaniment, but using songs from The Ebenezer Hymnal compiled by their founder in 1887. Their zeal for evangelism took them to the streets, saloons and billiard parlors.

By 1902 Brother E.T. Shick would challenge 115 members to pledge \$2,500 to cover the cost of a brick church, capacity 250, now named Bethel M.B.C. built on the street side of their lot^b. The building would be heated by an iron coal stove and lighted by kerosene lamps on the wall. The prayer rail and an "amen" bench to the right were prominent up front where sinners would kneel for salvation. In 1904 Pastor Roth moved into the newly purchased parsonage (\$2,320) at 819 Gordon Street; his yearly income was \$416.23.

Horse-drawn vehicles and trolley cars filled the streets for business and pleasure by 1910, as many thousands of immigrants flooded the city. Allentown was now overcrowded, fast-paced and noisy and the "class" had 162 members. Many would be blessed at the new camp location in East Allentown, called Mizpah, with its 1000 seat tabernacle and no sound system where the new pastor E.N. Cassel (1907-1910) would preach from time to time in English but mostly in German. Protracted (lengthy) evangelistic meetings and revivals saw people saved or "reclaimed", others were anointed for healing and others sought sanctification. Quarterly conferences were held on Saturday and Sunday every trimester where the denominational Presiding Elder would evaluate the strength of the "class", and foot-washing would be practiced after a love feast. Reports were received that were "good, spicy and enjoyed by all". On the Lord's Day, in the early days, believers kneeled at the altar rail to receive communion from a common cup of wine.

Under the able leadership of W.S. Hottel (1910-1914), who was a fiery preacher and a good Bible teacher^c, the church flourished with 195 members, 314 in Sunday school classes with 30 trained teachers. Sermons in German were now preached only once a month.

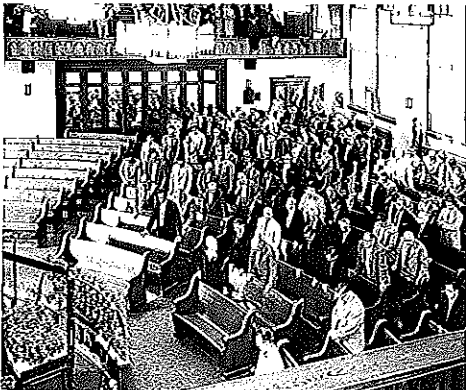
In the summer of 1914 the façade was modified at the cost of \$1,800 to give more space at the back of the sanctuary – the entrance now to the left and with larger windows. By 1915 under C.H. Brumer (1914-1920) the basement was completely excavated for more space, with carpet on the wooden floor, and a steam boiler furnace. A water faucet, a gas stove and electricity allowed for better quarterly conferences and the pastor had a phone in the parsonage.



At Christmas the pastor would receive a special gift--- one year dollar bills fell from a slot in the ceiling, another year the hub of a wagon wheel concealed a roll of bills that had been sown together. The pastor's report reads "the prayer meetings are largely attended and spiritual (everybody prayed out loud). Members stand by the work well, are steadfast and loyal. Harmony and devotion prevail". On August 1916 discussion led to the creation of a building fund and by 1918 the large Sunday school began soliciting funds. A September 1919 financial report shows \$2,329 in an interest-earning bank account. On September 9, 1920 the Baer lots on N. 8th St. were purchased (\$2,990) for a much-needed building, because membership was at 221. The Allentown parsonage hosted the committee meetings in 1916-1917 which compiled the ROSE of SHARON hymnal with music and no German.

Brother B. Bryan Musselman was "stationed" at Bethel in 1920 and would remain for 25 years. A charismatic personality and powerful preacher, by June 1921 he would also oversee a construction project with a 19 member building committee planning for a 700 seat building at 526-530 N. 8th St. On January 15, 1923 the following decision was approved at the quarterly conference: "Whereas the building committee has felt the imperative need for a larger place of worship to successfully take care of the growing demands made by the Sunday school and the church as a whole, and whereas the coming generations of our own families demand it, be it resolved that we take the steps to build a new church on N. 8th St. this coming Spring". The exterior structure appears to be finished by autumn with the use of 24,000 bricks and hundreds of slates on the roof. At the completion of the project \$14,500 had been received as cash gifts and \$22,300 were personal loans^d. The dedication to the task of financing the building is powerfully indicated by one founder (1889) Oscar Baer's statement "There will be no butter on our table until the building is paid for". Records indicate more than 23,000 hours of volunteer labor were willingly sacrificed by the men of the church. The building cost would be \$93,000, with indebtedness incurred being \$61,800 in bank and other loans^e. Bethel's 275 members dedicated their church on June 15, 1924. It included a fan-shaped configuration with street-side balcony over the mothers' room (with its wooden folding panels with large windows) and an alley-side balcony over the prayer meeting room with windowless panels. Since baptisms were still in

Allentown's Jordan Creek and no musical instruments nor choir were authorized, there was no need of a large platform for a baptistry or choir loft. The Morning Call reporter noted "the structure was beautiful in its simplicity, excellent as to its acoustic properties and very satisfactory as to its layout". He spoke of the musical part of the all-day program including "the Coopersburg Ladies Quartette and the Bethlehem Male Chorus unaccompanied in accordance with the Mennonite custom". Loyal Mennonite Brethren in Church brothers and sisters came from miles around in buggies, wagons and "machines" and 150 folding chairs were carried from the Gordon St church to accommodate the crowd. What an exciting, memorable day for God's glory. On April 8, 1924 a large parsonage^f was purchased across from the church, and all the properties on Gordon St. were soon sold.



Needless to say that during the construction, the vibrant congregation continued its Sunday School, its street meetings and evangelistic and revival meetings. Pastor Musselman described his flock as "spiritual and plain, true-hearted, whole-hearted, loyal and self-sacrificing". In 1960 old timers described a typical mid-week service led by a class leader (there were four in different locations): "In the 1920s and 30s a man would rise and give a testimony which lasted five to ten minutes; upon completion of his testimony another person would start a song (such as "We're marching to Zion"). As the song would be repeated, the people would stand up, wave handkerchiefs, clap their hands, stamp their feet and shout "Hallelujahs" and "Amens".... As the evening progressed this process would be repeated."

Olivia, B. Bryan's daughter, spoke of him as a master electrician, which surely led to his interest in radio as a means of reaching the Lehigh Valley by the air-waves. He was working already in 1923 with WCBA's Charles Heimbach as religious programs were produced and aired certain hours and days of the week. By 1925 Mr Heimbach had given the equipment and frequency to Pastor Musselman who was also managing the small station WSAN on the same frequency. Bethel was becoming the RADIO CHURCH and many listeners were also coming to hear the inspirational preacher. Two programs of special interest: The Back Home Hour, which was broadcast live from Bethel's basement on Sunday nights, where members were singing and responding to listener's requests for their preferred hymns, and the half-hour morning devotional, led by Bro. Musselman, whose theme was "When morning guilds the skies". Musical groups---vocal, brass, harmonica---were forming in the still a capella Radio church. A mixed "chorus" is mentioned in 1932, so a choir was now approved. Annual Rally Days were promotional days when S.S. attendance would surge. Women wore flowerless hats and no wedding bands were authorized; couples and family members only gathered in the parsonage to hear wedding vows. Church membership stood at 332 in 1939 after the difficult years of the Depression. Bethel would lose a few members when a piano was introduced at worship in late 1941 or early 1942. A greater loss would be the departure of 37 men and 2 women, either drafted or enlisted, for World War II. Sunday School attendance would drop to 240 as rationing of gasoline and tires curtailed church attendance and outings (Mizpah closed for four summers). B. Bryan Musselman would

retire from his pastoral ministry in September 1945 to give his energy to the growth of WSA^g which he purchased with his two children in 1950. Bethel continued to broadcast its worship service into the 1970s. Statistics in 1945 show a membership of 361 with a S.S. average of 238, Rally Day recorded 332 and Easter had 379. Offerings for the year \$27,652.

63 year old F.M. Hottel and wife Ida were "stationed" in Allentown from 1945-1948. With their servant hearts and calm demeanor, they were able to build the people's trust in their shepherd, denominational leaders and the local advisory board. Brother Hottel launched the Menno Youth program in September of 1947 as well as the summer Vacation Bible School. Sister Hottel revitalized the Cradle Department enrolling new babies to be followed-up for four years.^h The congregation spent \$900 on a baby grand piano in late 1945. A forty-member male chorus was organized who soon hired a music teacher (1946-52) to enable it to sing well in various programs in churches throughout the city.



In Sept. '48 the 40 year-old father of four, C. Leslie Miller became pastor. Serving first with the Gospel Herald Society and then 10 years in Africa, he was a gifted teacher and was soon writing adult S.S. materials which he shared not only with Bethel teachers but with other Lehigh Valley churches. He was responsible for the birth of the Women's Missionary Society, and the first annual missionary conference in 1950. Allentown's S.S. would grow from an average of 377 in 1949 to 606 with 56 teachers in 1954. The building saw improvements of a Public Address system, a new lighting system (\$4,000) and a completely-equipped mothers' room. The church spent \$6,000 in the summer of 1949 for an organ. Laymen would birth four afternoon Sunday schools in Greater Allentown for a five-year period. Pastor Miller spear-headed with Jansen Hartman in 1949 the creation of M.B.C.'s own Bible School, called Berean, for training future pastors and missionaries.ⁱ Bethel Church during his pastorate was much involved in vital changes in the denomination: churches would have the final say about a pastoral assignment; a petition to Annual Conference in 1952 would initiate the change in the denomination's name (It took 7 years). Mid-week services were reduced from four to two; the office of deacon was begun in 1953 replacing the trustees. A part-time minister of music (\$2,500) was hired in 1953. The practice of feet washing was beginning to fade. C. Leslie Miller would leave Allentown in 1954 to become a writer/editor for Union Gospel Press and later for Gospel Light in California.

Walter, a son of Bethel, and Ethel Frank with their young family, were the spiritual leaders from 1954-1960. He had served with the Gospel Heralds and had two years of foreign missionary service in Germany with Youth for Christ. An assistant trained under Brother Frank said of him: "He has in all situations and instances shown himself to be all that a man of God ought to be". Walter and Ethel were steady in purpose and a good fit to continue many of the initiatives of Pastor Miller. At one period Walter supervised eight candidates for pastoral ministry (called

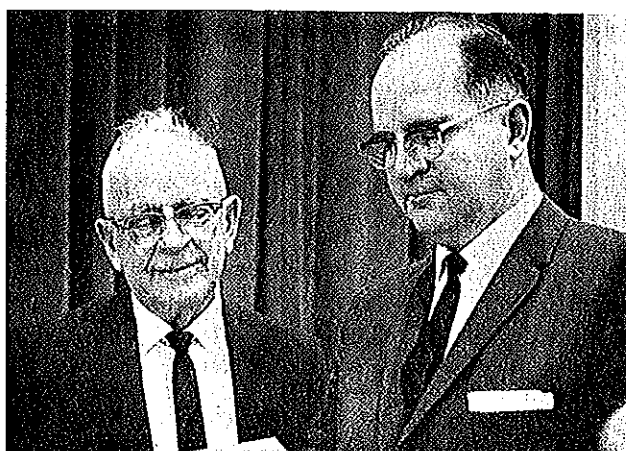
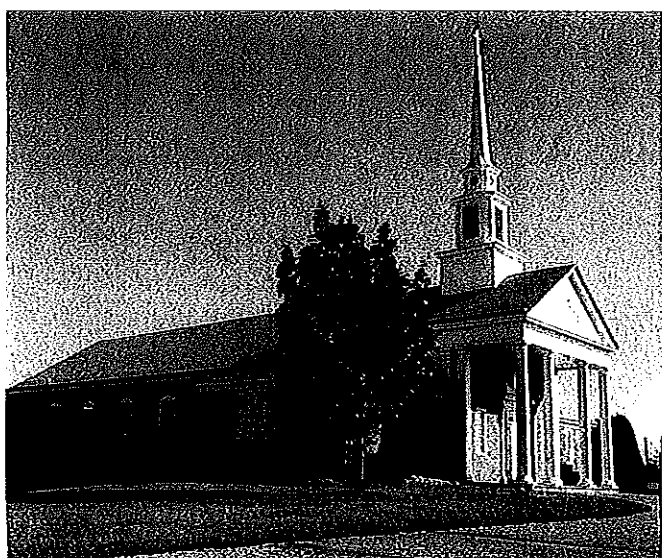
local workers). The 1950s saw the following homegrown foreign missionaries "outfitted" by the active Women's Missionary Society and greatly financed by Bethel: Laird and Mary Ann Stengele, Dorothy (Brobst) and Barley Harley, Austin and Ruth Shelly, Doris Schaeffer (later Mrs. Ron Hoyle), Roy and Diane Herzog, Marlene (Deppe) and Aaron Hoffman. Pastor Frank and the Kermit Gehmans were a strong force in establishing Victory Valley Camp. The church's advisory board would now be called the official board after 1957. The pastor's support (\$8,000 in 1954-55) was received as gifts in stewardship envelopes. Plate collections were received Sunday a.m., p.m. and Weds. nights for general expenses. Pledged funds were received for Home and Foreign missions in church and S.S. Pioneer Girls and Christian Service Brigade were begun in 1957. Average attendance in Sunday School peaked at 677 in 1957-58 with 756 on Rally Day and 807 present on Easter Sunday. To show the vitality of the S. S. ministry in 1958-1959, offerings were \$8,600 and expenditures \$9,500. Discussion was even held on giving relief to the Young People's Dept. by using the parsonage. Properties 812-818 were bought for staff housing, S.S. and office use. But talk of moving began in 1957; August '59 local conference resolved to consider relocation. After five years as board member of Greater Europe Mission, Walter Frank accepted its call to be General Director, effective September 1960.



Rev. A.L. Seifert and his wife Ruth shepherded the flock on 8th St. for only two years (1960-62). A college grad, a navy veteran, experienced Herald, Arlington came to Bethel in the midst of sweeping changes in the newly-named Bible Fellowship Church. His son Dale said of him "While not married to statistics Dad knew that healthy flocks show steady increases (in attendance and offerings). He loved the Word, believing a pastor's main duty was studying, looking for Christ in every Scriptural passage and then gladly teaching and preaching it." A man of integrity, Pastor Seifert gave godly and practical advice and empathized with his flock in times of joy and sorrow. After completing the purchase of the 12 acre lot on Cedar Crest Blvd for \$50,000 in August of 1961 from a reserve of \$39,600, a preliminary architectural study was made on "proposed buildings". Closed circuit radio units were installed in the homes of shut-ins, and a deacon's task included visiting the sick and home-bound. The barn behind the 512 building was winterized for the newly named Youth Council. No 534 was purchased and demolished for badly-needed parking. Sunday School attendance still numbered in 600's. Always concerned for home and foreign missions Pastor Seifert challenged Bethel's members and friends to give to a goal of \$25,000 using a pledge card. At Annual Conference '62 pastors and delegates elected A.L. Seifert as the only and final District Superintendent.

Bethel birthed a daughter church over a period of eight years. In 1961 a poll of 211 wage-earners representing 449 individuals shows 98 voted to move, 79 preferred to stay and 22 were undecided. Discussions within the Official Board continued and by 1962 their own vote shows "8 want to stay, 8 want to move, 3 are neutral and one ballot is blank". In March of 1963 a committee was established to plan for a church plant. Building funds were now earmarked for

either 8th St. or Cedar Crest Blvd. Reserves in 1964 show \$11,000 for development on the CC lots and \$14,385 for renovations of the 8th St. properties. On Oct. 24, 1964 there was a visual presentation of a possible building in the suburbs and in early 1966 the board recommended creating two different accounts with a goal of \$35,000. Bethel eventually released 71 and a year later 24 of its members as the new core group. Ground was broken in May, the name Cedar Crest B.F.C. was chosen in September and a cornerstone placed in December. The first use of the church was August 13, 1967 and dedication was held on Sept. 24. The new building cost \$190,000, with a mortgage of \$150,000 at 5% for 25 years with monthly payments of \$877.50. The building had a 300 seat capacity with a choir loft and a baptistry!!! Worship attendance recorded the first months was 166. Bethel's official board still wrestled with whether to stay downtown, but in Oct. 1967 it recommended staying on 8th St. In late '68 Bethel purchased the corner house at Liberty St., by then owning all properties from 502-534 N. 8th St. Feb. 1970 minutes speak of building new Christian Education facilities south of the church.



Retired minister, W.F. Heffner with his son, William A. Heffner, pastor of Cedar Crest Church

In 1962 thirty-two year old Carl (and Charlene and their three boys) Cassel (with family tree links to both E.N. Cassel and F.M. Hottel) accepted the call to Bethel. After four years of a general "budget"--- a new idea---which did not include items such as Sunday School, Youth, Women's Missionary Society, or pastoral support, a vote by the congregation at local conference saw a Unified Budget in place in 1967 which included all accounts. Its implementation meant the end of the officers called stewards (who for decades had solicited the gifts for the pastor) and building fund collectors. The budget (67-68) had funds for Bethel Camp^k, evangelistic meetings and \$7,000 for pastor's salary. The missionary conference was still an eight-day affair and the W.M.S. was much involved in sending and equipping career missionaries even into their second and third terms. Missionary Ted Shelling began receiving monthly support in 1963. Changes in BFC church doctrine came as pastors with seminary training addressed the issues that Reformed Theology presented to the older men in the denomination who defended the free-will position. In August of 1964 Bethel's official board had a lengthy discussion on adoption, predestination and election. That autumn 34 members withdrew (the founders of Faith Evangelical Free Church) telling Pastor Cassel their departure was due to the lack of altar calls and no preaching on the imminent (any moment) rapture. Membership dropped from 511 in the fall of 1964 to 449 in 1965. Carl was much involved in the careful birthing of the daughter church and saw another loss as a total of 95 members transferred to the Cedar Crest location. Through the 60's Bethel had a number of part-time music directors until in Sept. 1966 when David Odgen came as choir director/ minister of music for 13 years. New hymnals were purchased in 1967 being paid for by

the estate of Allen Weiss (who was a member of Bethel's male sextet in 1917). In Sept. 1970 Rev. Cassel accepted the offer to be Academic Dean of Pinebrook Jr. College.



Rev. James and Bea Koch, a middle-aged couple, having trained in the Gospel Herald, brought a traditional ministry again to Allentown from September 1970 to March 1977. Jim was aided by Dave Thomann in 1976 as Youth Pastor. Clarence Kauffman (1949-1982) and Clarence Willetts (1948-1981) played the organ and piano respectively. The church celebrated the golden anniversary of its building in October 1973 (error!) and dedicated a digital computerized Allen organ. The senior and junior choirs had yellow robes by then but continued to sing from the left balcony. 1974 saw the implementation of the rule by Elders, thus ending the role of the official board. Committees still had an important role in the total ministry as this 1976 list indicates:

Elders, Deacons, Evangelism, Finance, Music/Worship, Missionary,
Sunday School Executive, Pastoral Relations, Ordinances,
Property/Maintenance, Pioneer Girls, Christian Service Brigade,
Flowers, Camp Bethel, Benevolence, and Youth Fellowship

The many years of broadcasting the Gospel by radio ended in the Spring of 1976 (a weekly cost of \$40) but the bus ministry begun in 1972 continued strong. Evangelistic campaigns and missionary conferences were held annually, with Connie Hartman leaving for Austria in 1974. In March of 1977 sixty percent of the membership accepted the resignation of Pastor Koch.

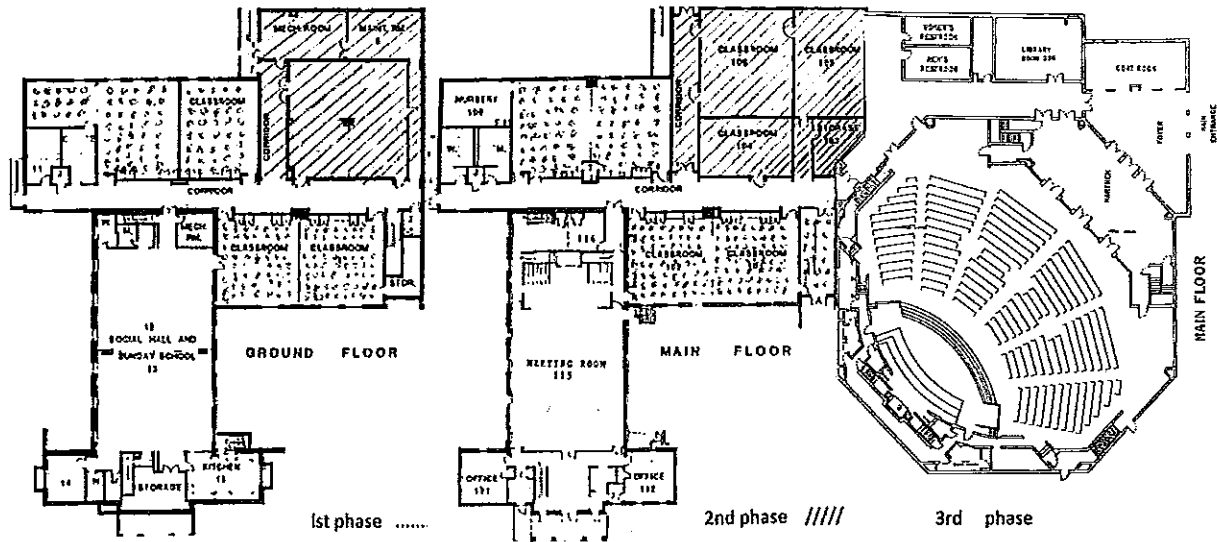
In the initial years the Cedar Crest Church, with its 100 plus attendees, mostly from Bethel, and a Sunday school average of 161, experienced growing pains. Though its first pastor, 50 year-old William Heffner, had experience as a church-planting Gospel Herald, his stay in Allentown lasted just two years. Some spoke of a personality change but a later diagnosis of a brain tumor could explain his problems with the official board. A loyal membership, including a Sunday school staff of thirty, maintained the church program with a 206 Sunday school average in October of 1969. By then supply pastor Robert Salzman (September 1968-September 1970) with no B.F.C. roots but approved by the denomination was ruffling feathers with his hype-Calvinistic preaching. His replacement, also a supply pastor with no previous B.F.C. affiliation, Dean Bult, though very evangelistic (26 baptisms and 400 visits in one year plus 180 kids and adults in V.B.S. in 1972), proved naïve and autocratic and submitted his resignation in May of 1973. A strong interest in missions would continue through these tumultuous years. An anecdote: the wives of church leaders laughingly said that they needed to keep their buckets and mops at-the-ready never knowing how soon they'd have to clean the parsonage for the next pastoral family.

Rev. Roy Hertzog, wife Diane and two children, after serving 14 years with TransWorld Radio accepted the unanimous call from C.C.B.F.C. in autumn of 1973. Roy was a stabilizing force, rebuilding a strong base both theologically and numerically with his strong counseling ministry. During these years there was a Good News Club of 60 kids, a V.B.S., evangelistic meetings, week-end missionary conferences and a strong bus ministry. He would implement the rule by Elder (1974) and his administrative gifts was used to help in the lengthy process of reuniting with the mother church. Under its chairman Jay Fasnacht, the Development Planning Committee (members Arthur Brobst, Terry Bellesfield and Howard Schaeffer) began discussing a master plan. Roy served the daughter church from 1973-1979, then was Associate Pastor with Pastor Mahurin after the merger (1979-1985).

Though Bethel had graciously enabled the birth of the C.C.B.F.C., by as early as 1975, she was revisiting the reasons^m why she should stay downtown. In June of 1975 there was an initial contact from Bethel to the CCBFC Elder Board about a possible merger. It was not, however, until March of 1977 that Bethel held serious discussions. By Dec. '78 momentum increased when 72 % of 247 of Bethel's members favored reuniting the two church families. In early 1979 an "interim program and activities committee", chaired by Tim Schaeffer, would recommend and implement ways to make the transition work well, including immediately combining the youth and Sunday evening programs. A master plan including a gym, school, and new sanctuary was approved by the combined congregations on September 16, 1979. Morning services for two years continued at the 8th St. location but Pastor Mahurin preached after September 1979 in both buildings on Sunday mornings. In 1981, the 8th St. church membership was 243 and on Cedar Crest Blvd, the number was 116. Soon parsonages were purchased near the Cedar Crest location and three houses as well as the parsonage across from Bethel were sold. The church was vacated, the cornerstone removedⁿ and a consolidation of all ministries began in suburbia on September 18, 1981 with two services.

Pastor Ron Mahurin, wife Darlene and five children, settled in an effective ministry role (for 24 years) in November 1977. Darlene was always at the entrance greeting old-timers and newcomers alike. Though some complained that the pastor's messages were too long, his homey style and his evangelistic emphasis were appreciated and brought growth. Though discussions were already underway about a merger with the daughter church, Pastor Mahurin enthusiastically committed many hours to bring about that major change. Phil Morrison became youth pastor in May of 1978 on 8th St. Ron would start preaching at both Cedar Crest and Bethel in 1979, joyfully sharing the work load with Roy Hertzog. Pastor Warren Shelly would be Christian Ed. director for three years beginning in 1980. Lehigh Christian Academy used two classroom in the original basement as early as 1981-82. Pastor Mahurin, with the gifted lay-leadership of John Trauch, would challenge the church to believe God for greater things and would guide three phases of development:

- Phase I: Eight classrooms dedicated in 1983; cost \$600,000; paid in full by November 1985.
- Phase II: Five classrooms and maintenance/heating spaces, cost \$595,000 dedicated in August 1987; indebtedness erased at the end of 1989
- Phase III: A worship center with two overflows and a balcony (total 1100 seats), a library, restrooms, hall of missions, cloak room, narthex and foyer; cost \$3,125,000, dedicated on September 1994 with 940 people present. Bank mortgage and individual loans (of \$2,600,000) were liquidated in April 2013.



Pastor Mahurin always kept God's vision for world evangelization before the congregation. The concept of Faith Commitment was introduced in 1985 and continues today. Youth Pastor Mark Solt led the first short-term team (Mexico) of 28 youth and sponsors in 1984. Early in 1987 the missionary committee began praying about "Adopt a People" and received church approval in October to implement it. Youth Pastor Cliff Boone (1985-1990) led a team to Tanzania for five weeks to survey unreached people groups. By 1990 faith commitment giving surged to \$54,000 as the Boones, LoRussos and Tina Getter began a ministry among the Sandawee. The John Nicelys began their missionary career in September 1989. Twenty adults served in construction in Quadeloupe in the Spring of 1990. Bethel/Cedar Crest implemented outreach for Sunday School, Weds. night programs, and V.B.S. with buses from 1972-1988 at which time vans would prove more economical. For a few years an evening adult V.B.S. was held with outside speakers. Small groups were introduced in 1985 and outreach now extended to the Allentown Fair mobilizing youth and adults alike. When Pastor Herzog accepted to be General Secretary of the Board of Missions, the church invited Bob Johnson to join the staff (1985-1994).

Membership stood at 338 in 1984 and had climbed to 453 in 1989 in time for the Centennial Celebration with its goal of \$100,000 for debt reduction. By April of 1991 there were 518 members who enjoyed new hymnals. After the completion of the Worship Center, the 576 attendees had their worship experience enhanced by a grand piano, a Roger's organ and a 40 member choir in red robes, led by Tim Schaeffer. Pastor Johnson's health caused him to resign, so Rev. Ed Munyan helped with visitation (1995-2002). John Elias served as pastor of Family Life and Counseling (1995-2005). David Allen came in November 1996 to lead the Christian Ed Ministry and to oversee the ever-growing staff and the custodians needed for the Lehigh Christian Academy (grades 1-8th). At the end of 1996 the value of the church property was \$6,300,000. On June 30th, 2001 Pastor Mahurin retired from the pastorate (Darlene had died suddenly that Spring) to become Conference Pastor of the Bible Fellowship Church.

Pastor Cliff Boone returned as senior pastor in August of 2001 after 11 years in Tanzania. The budget in 2003 indicates 21 percent for world-wide outreach and in September Glenn Felty (2003-present) would lead the church in areas of missions and shepherd training. Succeeding youth pastor Ron Vining (1990-1994), home-grown Ron Kohl served from 1994-2004 and then accepted a call to the pastorate, replaced by Jon King as Assistant Pastor in charge of the next generation and young adult ministries. In the early 2000's Pastor Allen coordinated a Sunday evening program offering courses in a Family Bible Institute. By 2006 elders and others were

leading shepherding groups in various neighborhoods and two Sunday morning services were initiated with the “blended” format. Authorization was given in the summer of 2003 for architectural drawings for additional classrooms and a gymnasium. Three years later the project received church approval. As the congregation sought the Lord’s timing for a new step of faith, the badly needed elevator was constructed in 2006. After a year of reflection by the Elder Board and the final choice of a funding method, leadership in September 2006 recommended the use of a Scriptural Funding Campaign^o to motivate sacrificial giving. After four months of Scriptural teaching in all ages of Sunday school, in shepherding groups and sermon content, 243 pledges were received in Feb. 2007 for a three year period for four million dollars (with a total of 570 participants) to cover the eventual cost of an Activity Center and fourteen classrooms (three would be partitioned for pastors’ and secretaries’ offices). Construction of the C.E. wing began on December 23, 2007 at a cost of \$1,800,000 – expenses shared with L.C.A. – and dedicated on August 31, 2008. With more space available in the new wing, there was a redoing of some older space for two new nurseries, a room for nursing mothers, two rest rooms (all on the main level) and a large youth room (on the basement level). In spite of a serious economic downturn, God’s people (91 percent) kept their commitments to pay for the educational wing, the Activity Center (capacity 1500), a much-needed large kitchen and a two room Food Bank, at the cost of \$4,800,000. In order to demonstrate wise stewardship, the construction of a small fellowship hall and a suite of offices was postponed. The Activity Center was dedicated in December of 2009 and all indebtedness removed by October 2014. In January 2010, after thirteen years at C.C.B.F.C., Pastor Allen accepted the new leadership role of the B.F.C. Executive Director.

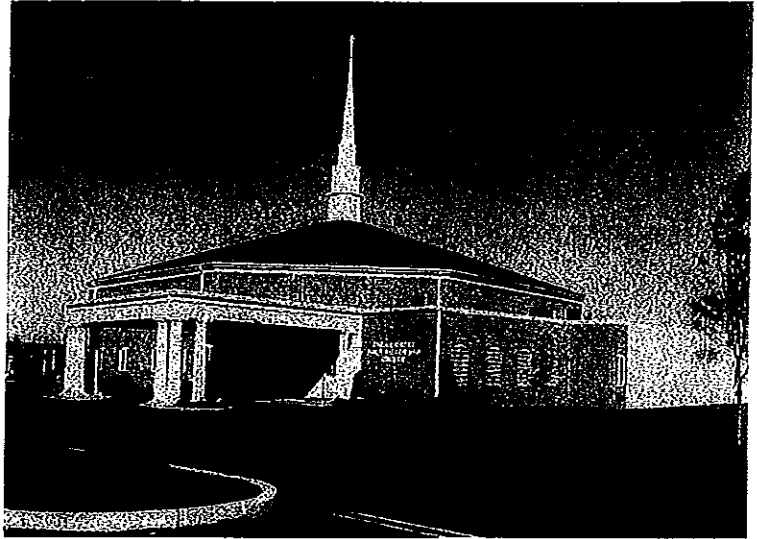
Other initiatives during these dynamic years included the involvement of the John LoRussos, the Jason Raines and Amanda Brennan with Unreached Peoples in Tanzania; the partnership with the Hispanic work in South Allentown and the annual Memorial Day service, both coordinated by Pastor Ron Erb (2005-present), responsible for local outreach. New mission committees^p were established, the Elder Board reorganized, and 30+ Life Groups were coordinated by Pastor Scott Kappes (2010- present) also responsible for the assimilation of new people. At the request of the younger members, the Sunday morning format was modified – a Heritage service with choir and organ and a Celebration service with a praise band. Tim Schaeffer, great-grandson of charter member Jesse Schaeffer, continues as director of worship and music ministries. Pastor Boone preaches his same expository sermon both times, but the dress code and pulpit furniture changed.

Each year youth and adults minister across the world. Although the Women’s Missionary Society has been replaced by a Women’s Ministry, there is still a special missions' emphasis in October, including a ladies' dinner, on-going since 1960, as a fund-raiser for missionary Christmas gifts. In April, there is a Sunday dedicated to a local outreach theme. It is noteworthy that though budget items for salaries and building projects had greatly increased, during the years 2003-2013, more than \$1,300,000 had been used from faith-commitment and general funds for Outreach. Income in 2013: \$2,152,000; disbursements: \$2,070,000. Estimated figures for 2014: worship attendance 800 (300 in 1st service, 500 in 2nd service), membership 600, Sunday School 380, Life groups 300. Budget \$1,472,600 including \$253,500 for Outreach plus Faith Commitment \$120,000. Value of church property \$12 million.

MOTTO: OUR PASSION... GOD’S GLORY!

**Mission: To make disciples of Jesus Christ throughout the Lehigh Valley
and among the nations...especially Unreached People Groups.**

Cedar Crest Bible Fellowship Church



***1151 S. Cedar Crest Blvd.
Allentown, PA 18103
(610) 432-2200***



BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Lehigh County Health Records kept by pastors 1892-1906

Conference Yearbooks 1896 to present

Financial Records of early years

Quarterly Conference Records/ Congregational meetings; years 1924-1945 missing

Journal of Building Committee 1921-1924

Bethel Church Brochures 1953 Our Faith, Practice, Organization; 1954 Bethel Today

Short History of Bethel thru 1960 by Donald Anthony

Memoire of Olivia Musselman Barnes

Elders' Minutes after 1974

Newspaper Articles from the Morning Call

Women's Missionary Society Minutes 1957-69

Statistics/ Leaders Bethel Sunday School 1944-1976 compiled by Joyce Gehman

Program of the Golden Anniversary of Bethel's Building

Programs of the Building Dedicatons and 1989 Centennial

Summary of Preparation and Execution of Centennial Day by Neal Montgomery

Bible Fellowship Archives for Pictures

INTERVIEWS: Pastors Cassel , Hertzog and Mahurin; Pattisons, John Donmoyer, Jean Brobst, Robin

Musselman

Roy's (Bellesfield) Reminiscences

ALLENTOWN CHURCH

Stats for each 25 yr period

MEMBERSHIP		VALUATION		OFFERINGS	
Prayer Meet. Causes	210	Prayer Meet. Causes	210	Prayer Meet. Causes	210
M. B. C. Sunday School	210	M. B. C. Sunday School	210	M. B. C. Sunday School	210
Officers & Teachers	210	Officers & Teachers	210	Officers & Teachers	210
Scholars Enrolled	210	Scholars Enrolled	210	Scholars Enrolled	210
Total Enrollments	210	Total Enrollments	210	Total Enrollments	210
Total Average Attend.	210	Total Average Attend.	210	Total Average Attend.	210
New Subscribers to G. N.	210	New Subscribers to G. N.	210	New Subscribers to G. N.	210
Total Number of Subscribers	210	Total Number of Subscribers	210	Total Number of Subscribers	210
Churches	210	Churches	210	Churches	210
Parsonage	210	Parsonage	210	Parsonage	210
Ministers' Homes	210	Ministers' Homes	210	Ministers' Homes	210
Increase of Church Property	210	Increase of Church Property	210	Increase of Church Property	210
Present Valuation of Church Property	210	Present Valuation of Church Property	210	Present Valuation of Church Property	210
Per Church Properties	210	Per Church Properties	210	Per Church Properties	210
For Repairing Church Properties	210	For Repairing Church Properties	210	For Repairing Church Properties	210
Per Parsonage and Hall Rent	210	Per Parsonage and Hall Rent	210	Per Parsonage and Hall Rent	210
For Sexton and Sundry Expenses	210	For Sexton and Sundry Expenses	210	For Sexton and Sundry Expenses	210
Per Sunday School	210	Per Sunday School	210	Per Sunday School	210
Ministers in Cash	210	Ministers in Cash	210	Ministers in Cash	210
Ministers in other contributions	210	Ministers in other contributions	210	Ministers in other contributions	210
Per Home Missions	210	Per Home Missions	210	Per Home Missions	210
Per Foreign Missions	210	Per Foreign Missions	210	Per Foreign Missions	210
Per Foreign Missions in Sunday Schools	210	Per Foreign Missions in Sunday Schools	210	Per Foreign Missions in Sunday Schools	210

1914

MEMBERSHIP		VALUATION		OFFERINGS	
Class Leaders	4	Class Leaders	4	Class Leaders	4
Stewards	4	Stewards	4	Stewards	4
Wid. W. Collectors	4	Wid. W. Collectors	4	Wid. W. Collectors	4
Baptized	10	Baptized	10	Baptized	10
Members not Baptized	10	Members not Baptized	10	Members not Baptized	10
Children Dedicated	10	Children Dedicated	10	Children Dedicated	10
Received into Church Fellowship	10	Received into Church Fellowship	10	Received into Church Fellowship	10
Rec'd by Transfer	10	Rec'd by Transfer	10	Rec'd by Transfer	10
Total Increase	10	Total Increase	10	Total Increase	10
Withdrawals	10	Withdrawals	10	Withdrawals	10
Dropped	10	Dropped	10	Dropped	10
Moved to other Conf.	10	Moved to other Conf.	10	Moved to other Conf.	10
Total Decrease	10	Total Decrease	10	Total Decrease	10
Net Increase	10	Net Increase	10	Net Increase	10
Total Membership	10	Total Membership	10	Total Membership	10
Appointments	10	Appointments	10	Appointments	10
New Appointments	10	New Appointments	10	New Appointments	10
Sermons Preached	10	Sermons Preached	10	Sermons Preached	10
Pastoral Visits	10	Pastoral Visits	10	Pastoral Visits	10
Prayer Meetings Visited	10	Prayer Meetings Visited	10	Prayer Meetings Visited	10
Sunday Schools Visited	10	Sunday Schools Visited	10	Sunday Schools Visited	10
Prayer Meeting Cn. Officers & Teachers Enrolled	10	Prayer Meeting Cn. Officers & Teachers Enrolled	10	Prayer Meeting Cn. Officers & Teachers Enrolled	10
Scholars Enroll'd	10	Scholars Enroll'd	10	Scholars Enroll'd	10
Total Enrollment	10	Total Enrollment	10	Total Enrollment	10
Aver. Attendance	10	Aver. Attendance	10	Aver. Attendance	10
Present Valuation of Church Property	10	Present Valuation of Church Property	10	Present Valuation of Church Property	10
Home Missions	10	Home Missions	10	Home Missions	10
Foreign Missions	10	Foreign Missions	10	Foreign Missions	10
Foreign Missions in Sunday Schools	10	Foreign Missions in Sunday Schools	10	Foreign Missions in Sunday Schools	10

1939

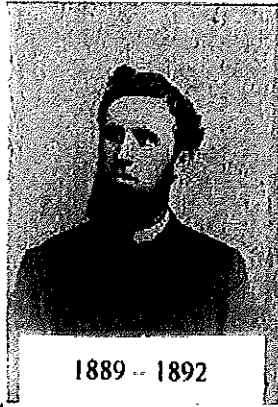
MEMBERSHIP		VALUATION		OFFERINGS	
Died	0	Died	0	Died	0
Withdrawn	4	Withdrawn	4	Withdrawn	4
Dropped	4	Dropped	4	Dropped	4
Transferred to F. F. Churches	4	Transferred to F. F. Churches	4	Transferred to F. F. Churches	4
Transferred to Other Churches	4	Transferred to Other Churches	4	Transferred to Other Churches	4
Total Decrease	4	Total Decrease	4	Total Decrease	4
Net Increase	4	Net Increase	4	Net Increase	4
Net Decrease	4	Net Decrease	4	Net Decrease	4
Total Membership	497	Total Membership	497	Total Membership	497
Sermons Preached	78	Sermons Preached	78	Sermons Preached	78
Pastoral Visits	443	Pastoral Visits	443	Pastoral Visits	443
Prayer Meetings Visited	45	Prayer Meetings Visited	45	Prayer Meetings Visited	45
Sunday Schools Visited	44	Sunday Schools Visited	44	Sunday Schools Visited	44
Baptized	10	Baptized	10	Baptized	10
Children Dedicated	10	Children Dedicated	10	Children Dedicated	10
Ministers in Cash	\$ 7,886.00	Ministers in Cash	\$ 7,886.00	Ministers in Cash	\$ 7,886.00
Ministers in Other Contributions	\$ 425.00	Ministers in Other Contributions	\$ 425.00	Ministers in Other Contributions	\$ 425.00
Sunday School	\$ 8,104.73	Sunday School	\$ 8,104.73	Sunday School	\$ 8,104.73
Scholars Enrolled	923	Scholars Enrolled	923	Scholars Enrolled	923
Total Enrollment	723	Total Enrollment	723	Total Enrollment	723
Total Average Attendance	551	Total Average Attendance	551	Total Average Attendance	551
Present Valuation of Church Property	\$ 270,000.00	Present Valuation of Church Property	\$ 270,000.00	Present Valuation of Church Property	\$ 270,000.00

1964

Pastor's Activities		Membership		Attendance	
Offerings	6	Offerings	6	Offerings	6
Prayer	1	Prayer	1	Prayer	1
Wid. W.	9	Wid. W.	9	Wid. W.	9
Children	10	Children	10	Children	10
Members	339	Members	339	Members	339
Church	1606	Church	1606	Church	1606
Prayer	10	Prayer	10	Prayer	10
Members	32	Members	32	Members	32
Church	3	Church	3	Church	3
Members	0	Members	0	Members	0
Church	35	Church	35	Church	35
Members	2	Members	2	Members	2
Church	2	Church	2	Church	2
Members	3	Members	3	Members	3
Church	2	Church	2	Church	2
Members	2	Members	2	Members	2
Church	11	Church	11	Church	11
Members	24	Members	24	Members	24
Church	0	Church	0	Church	0
Members	437	Members	437	Members	437
Church	386	Church	386	Church	386
Members	456	Members	456	Members	456
Church	203	Church	203	Church	203

1989

Pastor's Activities		Membership		Attendance	
Offerings	22,600	Offerings	22,600	Offerings	22,600
Prayer	476	Prayer	476	Prayer	476
Wid. W.	18,000	Wid. W.	18,000	Wid. W.	18,000
Children	19,896	Children	19,896	Children	19,896
Members	90,780	Members	90,780	Members	90,780
Church	15,749	Church	15,749	Church	15,749
Members	20,337	Members	20,337	Members	20,337
Church	0	Church	0	Church	0
Members	4,966	Members	4,966	Members	4,966
Church	67,573	Church	67,573	Church	67,573
Members	7,615	Members	7,615	Members	7,615
Church	1,800,000	Church	1,800,000	Church	1,800,000
Members	516,122	Members	516,122	Members	516,122
Church	515,852	Church	515,852	Church	515,852
Members	539,949	Members	539,949	Members	539,949



1889 - 1892
W. B. Musselman



1892 - 1895
O. S. Hillegass and wife



1895 - 1897
Rev. L. B. Taylor

Picture
Not
Available

J. L. Boyer
1897-1898



Wilson Steinmetz
1898-1901



1901 - 1903
E T Schick and family



1903 - 1906
J. C. Roth and family



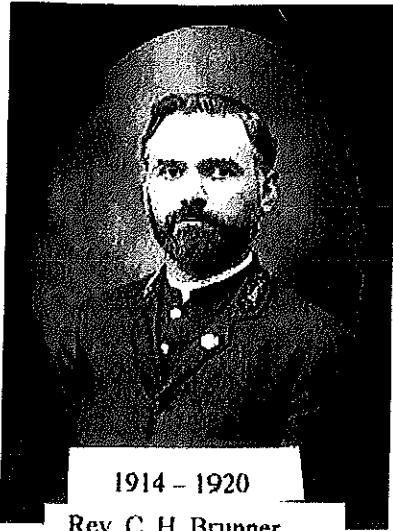
1906 - 1907
Rev. J. F. Barrall



1907 - 1910
E. N. Cassel and family



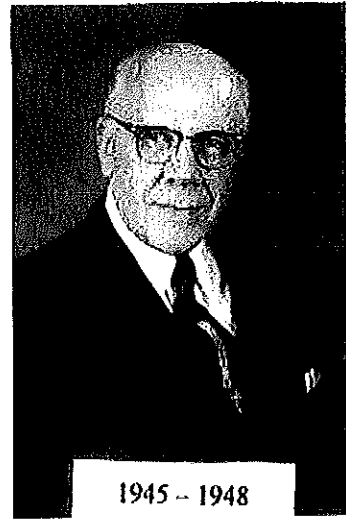
1910 - 1914
W. S. Hottel family



1914 - 1920
Rev. C. H. Brunner



1920 - 1945
B. Bryan Musselman and family



1945 - 1948
F. M. Hottel



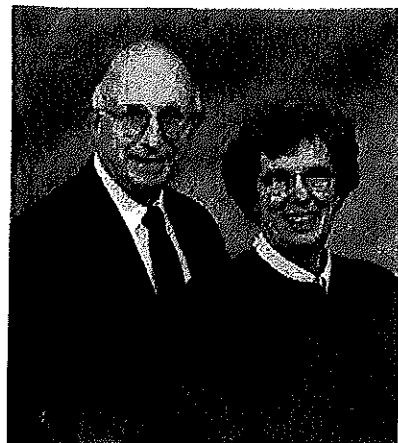
1948 - 1954
C. Leslie Miller and family



1954 - 1960
Walter Frank Family



1960-1962
A. L. Selfert



1962-1970
Carl/Charlene Cassel



1970-77
Rev. James G. Koch



Roy & Diane Hartzog
1973-1985



Ronald C. Mahurin
1977-2001



Robert T. Johnson
Associate Pastor
1983-1994

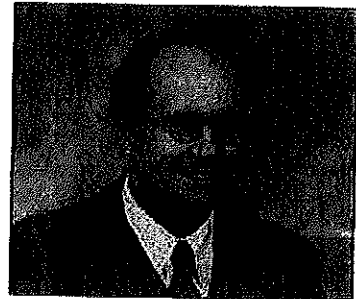


Ron R. Vining
1990-1994



1995-2005 1995-2002

John C. Elias, Pastor of Family Life Ministries & Counseling; Edgar H. Munyan, Pastor of Visitation



Ron Kohl
1994-2004



Inda Raines, Simona King, Carla Erb, Tim Schaeffer, Becky Boone, Donna Allen, Shirley Felty
Jonathan King, Ron Erb, Cliff Boone, Dave Allen, Glenn Felty



2010-present
KAPPES, Scott & Terry

FOOTNOTES

- a Alcove projection with windows to lighten the pulpit area in both Gordon St buildings
- b In 1903 the chapel was dismantled and with \$100 became a custodian's house
- c W.S. Hottel was assigned to write S.S. materials for the MBC and Union Gospel Press
- d One fund raiser was the use of Dime banks
- e Loans from the Benevolent Society of the MBC and personal loans for church/parsonage repaid
in 1944 \$8,657; in 1945 \$6,818 and \$5,431 plus interest
- f Musselman asked for these improvements on the parsonage: fence (dogs), garage, side porch
- g B. Bryan continued his morning devotional until his death in 1957
- h Ida Hottel was alert for dlapers on clotheslines to invite new families
- i Camp Bethel land purchased by Francis Gehman and used in 1952 as a hunting lodge
- j PennDot paid \$52,525 in 1988 for 1.1 acres for I-78 ramp
- k Bunk House built and gift of 11 acres at Camp Bethel in 1963
- l Joy Pattison was first baby dedicated at CCBFC
- m Reasons for closing Bethel: lack of parking; costly up-gradng of buildings; neighborhood security
- n Bethel's cornerstone now located off parking to left of the Activity Center
- o The Master Plan for the Master's Glory . Goal: \$5 million. Theme: Equal Sacrifice NOT Equal Gifts
- p Outreach Committee: Misslony Care; Local Outreach; Short Term; Missionary Development