

EDITOR'S PREFACE

On behalf of the Historical Society of the Central Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church, I am pleased to introduce volume VIII of THE CHRONICLE. The cover picture and opening article commemorate the November 16, 1946, handshake that sealed the creation of the Evangelical United Brethren Church. Their inclusion here was inspired by the moving fiftieth anniversary celebration and re-enactment of that event hosted by the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference in November 1996.

The volume continues with two papers given at the Historical Society's 1996 annual meeting. The theme for that gathering was the past, present and future relationships between African-American and European-American Methodism. These timely papers continue the custom of presenting a series of articles with a unifying theme. The authors, Rev. Jeane B. Williams and Dr. Milton Loyer, hold similar positions in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) and United Methodist (UM) churches respectively. From their own denominational perspectives, they address the issues involved with both historical and prophetic insight.

Periodically the conference archives are utilized for student research papers. Such was the case in 1996 when Alison Gregory reconstructed the story of the Barbour's Methodist Church of Lycoming county. Written with scholarly compassion and insight, the paper describes a drama that unfolded and continues to unfold across much of rural central Pennsylvania. It is a distinct pleasure include this paper in volume VIII of THE CHRONICLE.

The volume concludes with an extended article on the history of the Concord circuit of the Methodist Episcopal Church. While Concord is at the northern end of Path Valley in western Franklin county, the circuit also included appointments in Perry, Juniata, Huntingdon and Fulton counties. The story tells of Methodist phenomena that occurred across the conference: Irish immigrants bringing their Wesleyan Methodism to America, Francis Asbury and other circuit riders organizing classes, circuit growth and development, interaction with the United Brethren, the Methodist Protestant split, and mighty laborers sent forth from small rural settings.

Compiled from various primary sources at the conference archives and the writings of earlier historians, the article is the work of no single author. Bygone chroniclers whose research notes were particularly helpful include Bertha Jones of the Waterloo church and Charles Berkheimer of the Central Pennsylvania Conference. In addition, recognition goes to the 1996 East Waterford Bicentennial Committee for staging a commendable celebration, re-stimulating interest in Concord circuit Methodism, and cooperating with the editor of THE CHRONICLE in the preparation of the article here presented.

Finally, it is with great appreciation that we dedicate this volume of THE CHRONICLE in honor of **Rev. Harold Hornbeck**, retired ministerial member of the Central Pennsylvania Conference and secretary of the Historical Society from its re-founding in 1985 until his "third retirement" in 1996. Raised and educated within the Evangelical branch of United Methodism, Harold received his license to preach in 1928 and served churches in the conference until his "second retirement" exactly 50 years later in 1978. THE CHRONICLE extends a special thank-you to three of Rev. Hornbeck's former churches whose financial support has made this dedication possible: Church Hill, Quiggleville, and State Road United Methodist Church.