

## Families

Few would argue that that the family is the most basic unit of society.

While United Methodism boasts of several well-known multi-generational ministerial families within central Pennsylvania, this section of *The Chronicle* focuses on three lesser-recognized extended families that have contributed to our rich heritage – one from each of our predecessor denominations: the Evangelical Association, the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the United Brethren Church. Each family story concludes with an extended family tree identifying and connecting the relevant pastors and missionaries – and, to further emphasize the geographical extent of their ministries, a list of their burial places.

The Klinefelter family of southern York County was instrumental in establishing some of the first classes, meeting houses, and cemeteries of Jacob Albright's Evangelical Association. In fact, had the family not been so missionary minded that they left the area to plant the denomination in other states, York County's Shrewsbury instead of Union County's New Berlin would likely have proven to be the first unofficial headquarters of the Evangelical Association – and the home of its first printing establishment and educational institution. That the Klinefelter family was intimately associated with the earliest founders of the denomination cannot be denied, as they are the namesakes of Lebanon County's Kleinfeltersville – the final resting place of Jacob Albright, and the site of a Heritage Landmark of the United Methodist Church.

The Beyer family of northern Blair County was instrumental in establishing Methodism not only in parts of Pennsylvania, but also in the Midwest and even in South America. The family originally came to Blair County from Maryland about 1797, where the family patriarch had reportedly been converted under the ministry of Francis Asbury. The story of how this family, under no formal appointment, and living in a wilderness area unserved by circuit riders, managed to organize classes, evangelize their neighbors and erect church buildings is one of dedication and sacrifice.

The Mower family of northern Franklin County practiced what they preached. From the early days of the United Brethren denomination the Mower home was open for hosting circuit riders and their meetings. It was not really a surprise to anyone when one of the sons had 11 children, nine sons and two daughters – and all nine sons were named after United Brethren pastors. Furthermore, eight of the nine sons entered the ministry and one of the daughters married a pastor. This family, the namesake of Mowersville, was also responsible for the erection of northern Franklin County's historic Otterbein Church.