

# THE CHRONICLE

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editor

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## EDITOR'S PREFACE

On behalf of the Historical Society of the Susquehanna Conference of the United Methodist Church, I present volume XXXIII of *The Chronicle*. For over thirty years, the society has produced a mix of scholarly, entertaining, informative and inspiring stories of United Methodism – all united by a common theme. This volume continues that tradition with the uniting theme of **life stories** – the manner in which things change throughout their existence

The lead article is about Rev. Jay Holmes Smith, a man whose **life story** passes through several cycles while interacting on two continents with some of the key movements and personalities of the twentieth century.

Individuals come together to form congregations and pastoral charges – and congregations and pastoral charges experience changes during their existence. The next two articles examine the **life stories** of two former long-standing charges within our conference. The Beach Haven charge is traced from its 1875 beginning until it ceased to exist as a pastoral appointment in 2020. An 1868 document traces the Sheshequin charge from its 1791 beginning until it became the familiar Hornbrook charge that continued for another century.

Pastoral charges are organized into conferences and denominations. The Pennsylvania Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church existed from 1829 to 1911, and for a multitude of reasons its story has never been told. In addition, a separate denomination known as the Methodist Church existed from 1858 to 1877 as an off-shoot of the Methodist Protestant Church. A pair of articles relate the **life stories** of these ecclesiastical organizations.

Ministries of congregations and conferences can also have **life stories** that move from conception to implementation to usefulness to discontinuation for one reason or another. Such were cases for a visionary church camp started by the First United Brethren congregation in Altoona and the University of Northern Pennsylvania established by the Wyoming Conference in Bethany, Wayne County PA. A pair of articles tell the **life stories** of these little-known enterprises.

Even inanimate objects have **life stories**. The final pair of articles examine the stories of an 1818 hymnbook and an early twentieth century oil painting which once graced the sanctuary of a now-closed church. The hymnal was printed in New Berlin, Union County PA, and rediscovered – after a journey involving various locations and denominations and interesting persons – in Selinsgrove, Snyder County, near where it started its journey. The painting, now re-united with the continuation of its original congregation, also has a **life story** with multiple twists.

May these articles serve to remind us all of the faithfulness of God in each of our own **life stories**. Pleasant reading!