

50th ANNIVERSARY
OF
BUHLER MENNONITE
CHURCH

1920 - 1970

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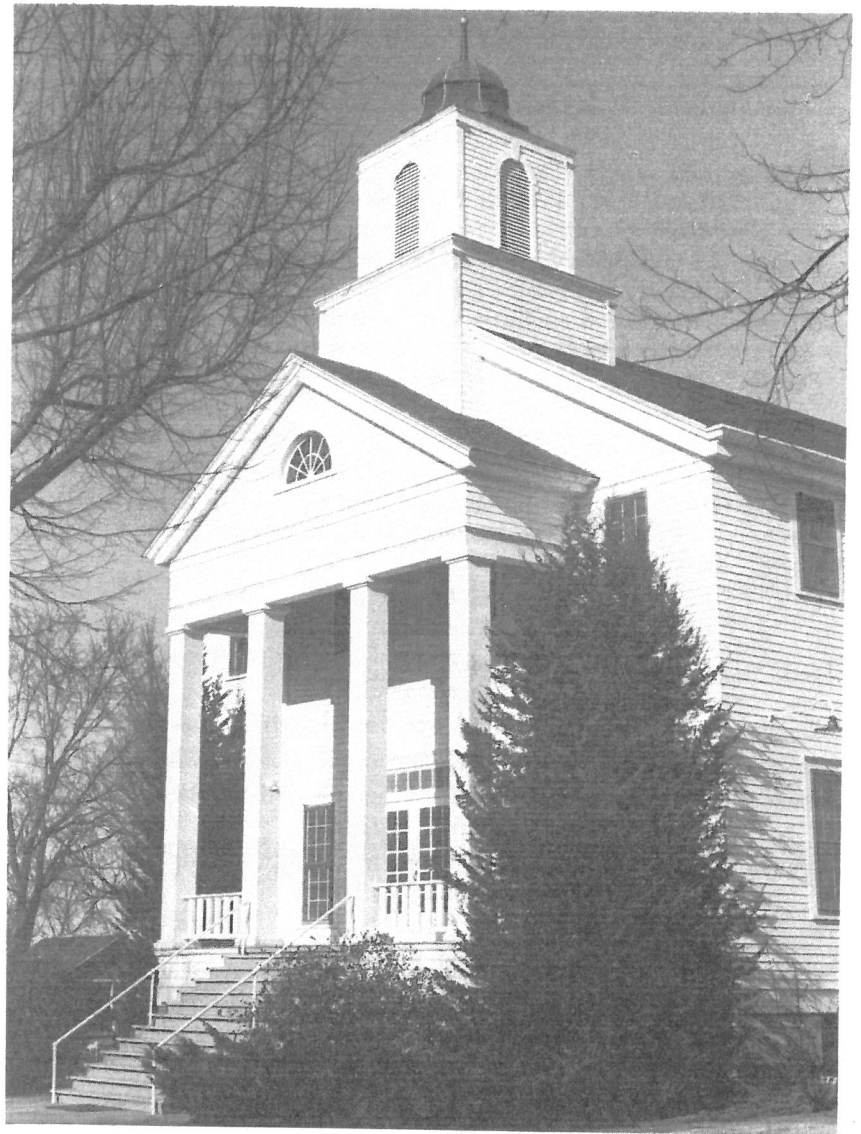
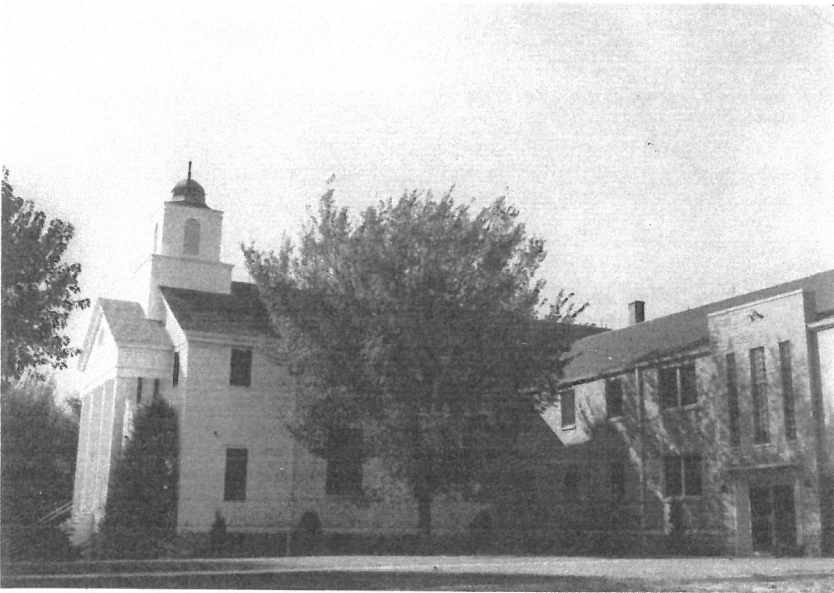
North Newton, Kansas

HOFFNUNGSAU CHURCH, BUHLER KANS.



The 1913 church called the Hoffnungsau church located in Buhler.

Sanctuary 1927—Sunday School Addition 1954 Buhler Mennonite Church



Front view of the Buhler Mennonite Church—1927

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY PROGRAM

PRELUDE

Meditation by T. Bubeck

Fantasia Triomphale by R. Martin

THE CALL TO WORSHIP

Minister: Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised in the city of our God.

People: *I was glad when they said to me, let us go to the house of the Lord.*

Minister: We have thought on thy steadfast love, O God, in the midst of thy temple.

People: *As thy name, O God, so thy praise reaches to the ends of the earth.*

THE INVOCATION (in unison)

O Lord, our Lord, exalted above all, of whom the stars sing and whose voice is heard within our hearts; shed light upon us from thy word: lift our hearts to thee, and receive our adoration, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

HYMN - "Faith of Our Fathers" - No. 154
(Unaccompanied)

HYMN - "O Have You Not Heard of That Beautiful Stream" - No. 232
(Unaccompanied)

ADDRESS - "Hoffnungsausau - The Mother Church" - Rev. P. K. Regier

ANTHEM - "God's House" - Children's Choir

ADDRESS - "Organization and Spiritual Growth of the Church"
Albert C. Becker

ADDRESS - "The Musical Development in the Life of the Church"
Mrs. William A. Buller

ANTHEM - "I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes" - Junior High Choir

ADDRESS - "Development of the Physical Plant" - Edward J. Voth

RECOGNITION OF FORMER MINISTERS - Rev. D. C. Wedel

ANTHEM - "We Praise and Bless Thee" - Adult Choir

THE SERMON - "What Shape the Church?" - Rev. Albert Gaeddert

THE OFFERTORY SENTENCE

THE OFFERTORY - "Prayer" - W. F. Ambrosia

THE OFFERING: Overseas Missions

HYMN - "Now Thank We All Our God" - No. 514

THE CLOSING PRAYER AND BENEDICTION - Rev. D. C. Wedel

POSTLUDE - "Soldiers of the King" - R. M. Stults

Organist and Pianist - Mr. and Mrs. John Scherling.
Congregational Singing directed by Robert W. Senner.

HOFFNUNGSAU - THE MOTHER CHURCH

The story of the mass immigration of Mennonites from Russia in 1874 is well known. Just to mention a few incidents out of the history making migration to the new world might not be out of place in order to connect it with the settlement out of which the Hoffnungsausau community and Church grew.

The great immigration of Mennonites from the large Alexanderwohl congregation in Russia divided itself into two groups which made separate journeys to America. Elder Jacob Buller headed the first contingent which founded the new Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church some 15 miles north of Newton, Kansas. The second contingent under the leadership of Dietrich Gaeddert also arrived in 1874. They came by way of Kansas City with Hutchinson as their final destination.

The Alexanderwohl group took their name from the Mother-Church in Russia. Not so the Hoffnungsausau group, and it is rather interesting how they got their name. On the day that a number of them had gone out from Hutchinson to look for a suitable location for settlement they came to a high ridge just north of present-day Buhler and could overlook the wide stretch of prairie before them. They seemed well impressed and one of the group is then to have said, "Dies ist ja eine wahrhaftige Hoffnungsausau." (This is truly a hopeful view.) Their leader heard the statement and suggested that this should be the name of the Church. And so it was.

It may well be said to the credit of these Mennonite pioneers that although they made their beginning under the most stringent living conditions, they did not neglect their spiritual needs. From the very beginning in 1874 they organized worship services in an immigrant house, a gift donated to them by the Santa Fe Railroad Company. In this building they worshiped until 1880, when it was destroyed by a tornado.

The group began to organize into a Church, a constitution was drawn up and a leader elected. There was, however, no elder among them. So in April, 1876, an election was held and Dietrich Gaeddert was elected, who served the newly organized Church until 1900, when he passed to his reward.

After the immigration house was destroyed, the congregation lost no time and built an adobe brick building at the site of the present building. Here they worshiped until 1898 when it was torn down and a large new church was built with a seating capacity of about one thousand. In 1935 extensive improvements were made and a spacious basement was added. This building served them well until 1948 when it was destroyed by fire.

At the time of the organization of the congregation, the need for a Sunday school was not yet recognized. However, religious instruction was given on Sunday afternoons in local public school buildings. Bible and the German language were also taught in public schools on weekdays,

usually in the morning until the first recess. Not too much later a well organized Sunday school developed and became a part of the regular Sunday morning worship services. I well remember a preschool age class held in the north balcony in the Low German language.

Such a thing as a Church Council was unknown in those days and therefore matters, both small and large, were decided by frequent meetings of the so-called *Bruderschaft*. It is rather interesting that one of the decisions passed by this congregational meeting was to the effect that the kitchen floor should be scrubbed.

As the name implies, these business meetings were truly a *Bruderschaft*. Not only did the women have no vote, they were not even allowed to attend. Women were never elected or appointed on committees and elected brethren took care, I suppose through their wives, of such matters as strictly pertained to women's concerns.

Discipline was strictly practiced. When members committed actions unbecoming to Christian standards, a committee usually composed of minister and/or deacons was appointed and ordered to visit the offender to bring him in line again. The ban of excommunication was freely practiced. However, upon confession and repentance the Church forgave the offender and he was again received into the fellowship.

Ethical standards were very strict and they were a far cry from the liberal spirit of permissiveness of our day. A resolution is on record where the *Bruderschaft* passed a motion to the effect that the Church take a positive stand against young people joining such a worldly organization as a musical or brass band. Another resolution is to the effect that the Church give a warning to the young people against going and attending a box supper.

With the passing of years, the Church grew in membership and it became too large to be served by one minister. Evangelists were chosen out of its own membership. Also branch Churches were established. The Buhler Mennonite Church was organized in 1920 and the Inman Mennonite Church in 1921. For some time these Churches were under the wing of the Mother Church and ministers of the Church served in these locations. Eventually, however, both of these groups became independent organizations and are, at present, thriving, growing, strong Churches, each with its full far-reaching Church program.

Here ends my story, and the next speaker will deal with the beginning and development of that body of believers, culminating in that great event which we celebrate today, the 50th Anniversary of the Buhler Mennonite Church.

by Rev. P. K. Regier

"ORGANIZATION AND SPIRITUAL GROWTH OF THE CHURCH"

First of all, may I express my personal thanks and appreciation to all who have given so much of their time and efforts to make this day possible. Much research has been done, checking of records, minutes and history. Many of the church minutes were recorded in handwritten German language, which limited the reading and interpretation to a certain number of people. Once again, my thanks to the committee and all who worked on this project.

I was born in the Oklahoma Panhandle which is now known as the Turpin community. I can remember a few incidents of my early Sunday school and church attendance. Occasionally I visit this area and it reminds me of the little country church there. At the age of seven the family moved to Buhler where we then began to attend the Buhler Mennonite Church. I have had many happy, pleasant and challenging experiences here in this congregation. As a lad and teen-ager, I remember my Sunday school and church attendance, I was baptized here, Florence and I accepted and exchanged our wedding vows, consecration of our children, baptism of the children, Jeanne's wedding, the last respects and services for my parents, the consecration of the granddaughter, and many enjoyable and challenging services of singing, praying and sermons. Some of my greatest and most inspiring moments have been in this church sitting together with my family in one pew. By now you are probably thinking—why the personal testimony and personal experiences - it is my firm belief that when we speak about the spiritual growth of a church we are also considering the growth of an individual. It is my hope that as I related my personal experiences to you that in your own mind you will be reminded of the many happy and inspiring moments you have had in your personal life in whatever congregation you have been attending.

Today we are going to have to keep in mind that we are a fast moving and changing society; many changes and transitions in the last few years. There are some here that will remember the hitching post in the church yard, the old "Model T" and the time when a few miles could make a travel problem. From the horse and buggy we have now seen the fast and luxurious automobile, the airplane, radio, television and even space travel. We have now gone from the little country church to scripture reading, prayer and communion in outer space and the moon. As we observe this anniversary we must remind ourselves of the great changes and the many areas or forces that are asking or bidding for our time, talents and money.

In the year 1913, the Hoffnungsau Church, often referred to as the Mother church, built a church in Buhler for the local group to begin their own services. To begin with and for approximately six or seven

years the Hoffnungsau Church supplied this group in Buhler with ministers and assisted in such affairs as needed. This Congregation will always be grateful to the Hoffnungsau Congregation for the support and assistance given during this period. On Dec. 14, 1919, the Buhler group held an official business meeting to consider the question of organizing a self-governing and self-supporting church. The vote—29 Yes and 4 No votes. Rev. P. R. Voth was temporarily called to lead the group. One week later, Dec. 21, 1919, a group of five men was chosen to work out a statement giving reasons for the desire to become a self-governed church which would be presented to the Hoffnungsau Church. Reasons given for this request were: the actual vote by the Buhler group, the need for a closer fellowship, the unity already developed in the Buhler group, location and distance, etc. It was made very clear that this move was to be made in a high spiritual relationship. This request now honored by both the Buhler group and the Hoffnungsau Church, the year of 1920 became a year of organizing and transitions. Property was officially transferred to the Buhler Church, an official name was accepted, that of Buhler Mennonite Church, a geographical name rather than a biblical name, a constitution was drawn which was patterned after the Mother Church. The first officers elected for this new congregation were: Chairman—Rev. P. R. Voth, secretary—C. H. Friesen, trustees—J. B. Buller, J. B. Regier, J. G. Unruh, A. B. Wall and F. F. Matthies. Rev. P. R. Voth was asked to serve the church on a permanent basis. Perhaps the most commonly accepted date for the official beginning of the Buhler Mennonite Church is Dec. 27, 1920, with a charter membership list of 156 members, most of these being transfers from the Hoffnungsau Church. At this time this congregation also became a part of the Western District Conference and the General Conference.

Some highlights during the early years and growth of the church: Nov. 9, 1920—It was decided to give the Sisters of the congregation the right to vote and take part in discussions and hold office as permitted. Transition from the German language to the English language in Sunday school and services was important. On Sept. 13, 1922, it was decided that since a number of teachers from the Buhler schools attended the Buhler Mennonite Church that an English speaking Sunday school class be organized. The language transition came slowly, it called for the practice of tolerance, understanding and patience. In the beginning all sermons were preached in the German language; then three in the German and one in the English per month; then two in the German and two in the English; then three in the English and one in the German and finally to an all English service. I find that in the earlier years records and minutes were kept in the German language and that in 1934 the yearbook was partly in German and the membership list in the English. In 1936 the yearbook was completely printed in the English language. Some services that have been discontinued over the period of years are

the Christian Endeavor Organization and the annual Sunday school picnic or "Children's Day" picnic. Perhaps these have been replaced by greater and broader Sunday school activities and the forming of a strong Youth Fellowship Group.

Others highlights: three constitutions have been accepted by this Congregation, one, the original in 1920, the second in 1941, and the present one in 1959. Pastors called by this Congregation; P. R. Voth, J. M. Suderman, John F. Schmidt, Henry Fransen, Irvin E. Richert and Harold D. Thieszen. Those serving in an interim capacity: A. J. Dyck, August Ewert, A. E. Krider, P. K. Regier and currently, David C. Wedel.

Ordained to the Ministry from this Congregation: Henry Fransen, Orlando Schmidt, Delton Franz and Curt Siemens, Lay Minister by Western District.

Ordained as Missionsaries: Harold and Ruth Regier Ratzlaff, Justina Schmidt Bogema, Arlene Friesen Allen and Roland Friesen. Deacons: eighteen have been chosen; the first two being J. F. Siemens and P. P. Schmidt. Nineteen Sunday School Superintendents have been elected. On Dec. 27, 1920, there were 156 charter members. Several years later, in 1925, Rev. P. R. Voth reported the membership at 233 members. At the 25th anniversary of the church a 350 membership was reported. At the last annual meeting the membership was 410 members. The high count at any one time has been 440 members. The highest Sunday school average attendance per Sunday was 288 and we have had Sunday school enrollment over the 400 mark or count.

Rev. Thieszen's second last annual report had this comment: 227 persons engaged or working in boards, committees, or offices. Make this observation, this means that a number of people are working.

May I refer back to the statement that I made earlier this morning. When speaking of the "Growth and Development" of a Congregation I think we are also speaking of the "Growth and Development" of an individual and a group of individuals. I would like to close with an article that I found in a magazine not too long ago, the author unknown at the time of the reading, which, I believe, challenges all of us in our personal and church living.

THIS IS MY CHURCH

It is composed of people like me. We make it what it is. I want it to be a church that is a lamp to the path of pilgrims, leading them to Goodness, Truth and Beauty. It will be, if I am.

It will be friendly, if I am friendly.

Its pews will be filled, if I help to fill them.

It will do great work, if I work.

It will make generous gifts to many causes, if I am a generous giver.

It will bring other people into its worship and fellowship, if I bring them.

It will be a church of loyalty and love, of fearlessness and faith, and a church with a noble spirit, if I, who make it what it is, am filled with these. There, with the help of God, I shall dedicate myself to the task of being all the things I want my church to be.

So once again this morning, we want to thank and praise God for the many blessings and inspirational moments and challenges we have experienced here in the Buhler Mennonite Church. May all of us, individually and collectively continue to be active and work in His Kingdom.

by Albert C. Becker

THE MUSIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHURCH

“Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous for praise is comely for the upright: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings. Sing unto him a new song; play skillfully with a loud voice. For the word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth.”

TAKEN FROM PSALM 33

In order to start at the beginning, we must go back a few years before 1920. This is the year 1913. It was here that a choir of 22 voices served the church with their songs to enrich the worship service. Of these 22 members, five are worshipping here from Sunday to Sunday. They are: Mrs. Anna Gaeddert, Mrs. J. K. Froese, Mrs. Dave Voth, Mr. Rudolf Schmidt, Mr. Henry Buller. The first song leader in 1920 was J. G. Unruh. At the organ was the late Mrs. H. B. Buller.

In 1926, a piano was purchased for the church.

1928—100 copies of Gospel songs were purchased; also the choir sang at a song fest.

1930—It was decided that the choir should bring a number each Sunday.

1931—A music committee of three was elected. This committee was:
The late Mrs. H. B. Buller
Mr. J. G. Unruh
Miss Edna Becker Ediger

1933—It was decided to have organ music before Sunday school. Also the choir was given \$25.00 for music.

1936—It was emphasized that the *Gesangbuch* might be used to a greater degree; also the wish was that the organ should accompany the singing more frequently.

1947—The church had felt a need for a new organ—A Wurlitzer Electric Organ was purchased and dedicated in December, 1947. Mrs. Mildred Gerbrand Ediger gave the recital.

1951—The robes worn presently by the choir were bought. This project was mostly financed by individual choir members.

1962—A new piano was purchased for the sanctuary; also additional choir robes were bought.

1965—Having had considerable expense with the upkeep of the organ, it was decided we should look into replacing the organ. This became a reality when the Allen Electric Organ was dedicated September 15, 1968.

Mrs. Esko Loewen gave the recital.

1970—The church purchased the latest edition of the *Mennonite Hymnals*. These are for use by the choirs as an introduction to the congregation. Buying enough for congregational use is hoped for in the near future.

We have been happy to have three active choirs serving the church: Senior Choir, Youth Choir and Junior Choir. The high school group have been willing to serve for special occasions. In December, 1970, the four choirs united and gave a Vesper Service of Christmas music. This was enjoyed by the congregation.

In the name of the church, we want to thank all who have served in the past and/or are serving at this date. The Lord will richly bless those who give of their talents to further the kingdom of God. Music has been, is, and always shall play a vital part in the worship service. May we all be challenged to give of our talents in some way.

by Mrs. William A. Buller

THE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT OF OUR CHURCH

“Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.”

PSALM 126:1

Many joyous days and memorable occasions have been shared by both former and present members of this congregation. Many early members are no longer living, but they planned ahead so well as they served faithfully in those early years of this century. The Hoffnungsau congregation, from which we derive, was widespread, and included the Buhler area as one of its seven districts. Because of travel hardships and the miles involved, many Sunday worship meetings were held in the UNION and LAKESIDE rural schoolhouses located a short distance from Buhler to the northeast and the southeast. In due time, many of the Hoffnungsau members living here wished for a local churchhouse in which they could meet more easily and worship together. They were probably really wanting to “cut the apron strings and go it on their own,” so to speak. Consequently, in early 1913 Hoffnungsau decided to build a smaller church in Buhler; but, there was one condition. It would be done when the money was available! To build with borrowed capital was not done in those days. Therefore, a committee of 14 members, two from each of the seven districts—one of which was the Buhler area, was set up to solicit the needed funds. One of these solicitors is living today, Mr. John G. Unruh of North Newton. These men must have worked hard, for enough money was committed that it was soon agreed to build. The building was to be 28 by 48 feet, and was to stand north and south; a furnace was to be included, also. This area amounts to 1,344 sq. ft., the area of a modern three or four bedroom home. The church grounds were purchased from Jacob Bartel, and electricity was brought to the plot. Mr. Bartel also served as head carpenter for the structure, and construction was started forthwith. Hoffnungsau members donated most of the money, and the congregation loaned the balance as needed. Thus, the Buhler Hoffnungsau Church,” as it was commonly called, was actually an extension of Hoffnungsau. The building, having been completed, was dedicated in September of 1913. Quite possibly, the west side wall of that building may have stood somewhat within the confines of the east side wall of this sanctuary. Regular Sunday worship meetings commenced with Hoffnungsau filling the pulpit needs as possible, and laymen preaching when necessary. By year-end 1919, first considerations for self-government were studied. We wanted an organized church of our own, as we felt we could manage it. Therefore, a formal petition was drawn, expressing our desire and reasons for the application. The petition was

presented to Hoffnungsau, and was granted seemingly without any questions or delay. They willingly helped us with the entire transition, supporting it in every way so that the separation was achieved in a most friendly and amicable way, becoming to both. On December 27, 1920, the Buhler Mennonite Church was formally organized with 155 charter members.

Things went along fine with Rev. P. R. Voth leading us as our first Pastor; but soon the pinch for more room began to be felt. By 1922, we were 184 members, who with their families were squeezing together in the limited room. Just imagine, if you will, over 200 people in an area smaller than one-half of this main floor area! As additional room was posing a desperate need, various ideas were explored and studied over the ensuing four or five years. Expanding the "old," or to build "new" were the alternatives. At least fifteen church meetings dealing directly with this problem were conducted; numerous decisions to do one or the other were made, only to be changed; or dropped; but, soon to be revived again and starting all over. Membership had increased to 233 by 1925, and it became imperative that action must very soon be taken. Late in 1926 we became serious and determined, and it was obvious that building a "new" church was heavily favored.

In March of 1927, we began the second phase of our physical development, having outgrown the "little old church" within a short span of 13 or 14 years. That same month a firm decision to start building a "new church" was made, and work commenced so quickly there just wasn't time for another change of mind! The trustees were ordered to sell the old church just as quickly as possible, or it might have to be moved to the east in order to make the needed room for the new structure. As an answer to prayer, a quick sale for \$1,000 was realized and immediate dismantling began, while at the same time digging for this basement excavation began, and no problems were thus encountered. The entire basement was dug by manpower and horsepower, and many a team "pulling contest" was staged in our basement! There were no motor-powered machines available at that time and so with sweat and laughter, singing and whistling, we "dug in" so that we could "build up." The congregation adopted a new building plan, measuring 40' x 80' x 22' high. The height was later adjusted to 24' so as to allow for the inclined floor and an adequate balcony. The aggregate area, with basement fully utilized, provided more than 4½ times the floor area of the former church building. One of the main carpenters was Mr. D. M. Schroeder, who is with us to this day. The original costs were very accurately forecast at about \$17,500, including the furnishings. Personal money gifts ranging from \$3 to \$500.00 from 155 church members, brought together almost \$15,500, and that amount plus the sale proceeds realized from the old building, and over \$1,150 in donated labor, provided the major money needs. By late summer, 1927, building completion was nearing, so in

October a church meeting was called for the planning of the dedication ceremonies. Among other things, it was decided to butcher a fattened steer, and to offer a fellowship meal to all who would be our guests at the big celebration. The dedication took place on November 20, 1927, with Dr. J. W. Kliever as principal speaker. With this fine new facility, we were really well fixed; enjoying a lovely roomy, new church—the "biggest and best" in town, as we young fellas boasted! For the next twenty years we were well settled and satisfied.

However, yet a new need was coming on the scene and in December, 1947, the trustees were instructed to study the possibilities of building a Christian Education Building.

This, then, marks the beginning of our third phase in the development; and seven and one half years later resulted in a sizable addition to this building. The educational wing fund-raising began in 1949, and in 1951 a building council was dissolved and a construction committee and a finance committee were formed, and set into motion. The congregation adopted suitable plans and ground-breaking commenced in August, 1954, completing the 36' x 88', 3 level addition by early summer of 1955. Special dedication services were conducted on June 19, 1955. It was a big, full day; with special morning worship services, the official dedication ceremonies in the afternoon, and an evening's musical program, bringing together seven Mennonite Congregations. This addition, by contrast, involved much more time and money than this main building, entailing over 14,000 man-hours of donated labor by members and friends of the church, plus over 3½ times the dollar costs of the 1927 undertaking. But the Educational Wing addition has provided so much for us! Eighteen Sunday school rooms, a library, church office, Pastor's study, a large kitchen, and a Fellowship Hall with a small kitchenette. With these provisions, we presently have a reasonable amount of room for the approximate 600 people using these facilities. This includes members, children not yet members, and friends of the community, whom we welcome here and who find this house of worship to their liking.

Our fourth and final phase in physical growth was that of providing the church parsonage, new and modern in design, and which is located one half block north of here. This undertaking seems relatively recent, so I shall not elaborate unnecessarily. Tomorrow, April 19th, will mark the 10th anniversary when this congregation in a special meeting decided to build the new parsonage. Construction started as soon as the necessary ground and other preliminary arrangements were cleared, and by April 1, 1962, the parsonage was completed and ready for a new minister. Plans for the dedication service were readied, as well as a reception for Rev. Harold Thieszen and his family, coming from Ohio to serve as pastor, and a farewell for Rev. P. K. Regier, as our departing interim minister. The parsonage was dedicated on June 10, 1962, and Rev. Thieszen's family

has been its only resident occupant, as he pastored this congregation for more than eight and one half years.

In Conclusion, let us be mindful that it has all been through the "grace of God" that we have fared so well, and achieved so much! We are, indeed, richly blessed! Therefore, let us not glory in what we have done for ourselves, nor for what we can show and see; that which money has provided. We must continue building; not physically, but spiritually. Towers unto God, and forget ourselves! Let us build all our tomorrows, with Christ as the foundation, and with that cornerstone called "Love," so that we may not build in vain but unto everlasting values based upon Christian Fellowship. "For if we love one another, God abides in us, and his love is perfected in us."

by Edward J. Voth

WHAT SHAPE THE CHURCH?

This is a day of thanksgiving—

a day which brings many remembrances;
but back of all of the recurring points of interest and remembrance remains the marvel of the beginning of the Church Movement, which began with Christ and His disciples!

A movement which spread rapidly; persons, individuals and by two's, and small groups spread the "movement" wherever they went.

And so also it came to these shores—of our country;
then here to the prairies—and the beginning of this church in Buhler.

Today: we try again to see ourselves in this long and noble perspective,
to take an honest and discerning look—over the years past,
discerningly looking about us now,
to see what signs are there, and how they read;
and to see which way the road-signs point for tomorrow;
what they suggest.

(From the Prophet Jeremiah comes the incident where he was imprisoned by his own people, because of warnings that he spoke against his people about lining up with foreign powers. The day came when the things Jeremiah spoke about were fulfilling themselves. So King Hezekiah, who apparently had some respect for Jeremiah's judgment,

but did not want to admit it openly,
so the king had Jeremiah brought secretly before him,
and with an anxiety that was more than the usual he asked the Prophet:

"Is there any word from the Lord!" (Jer. 37:17)
and the Prophet answered without hesitation: "There is!"

No doubt, this is a day when all of us are asking this very question:

"Is there any word from the Lord?"

Jeremiah gave the answer for that day:

we need to find the answer for our day, too; what this answer might be—
(look at it later!)

A word about the relationship between the two Churches: Hoffnungsau-Buhler Mennonite;

Mother-daughter relationship;

Whether they look much alike; exactly alike, or don't resemble one another much—

I do not quite know; being this close in proximity to each other,
they have been able to observe one another's ways closely,
and have also been able to work together closely,

perhaps help each other out, as well as provide friendly and healthy stimuli of growth for one another - and for the Kingdom!
In the Committee's letter of invitation, mention was made of my being the grandson of Grandfather Dietrich Gaeddert, the first elder of the Hoffnungsau Church,
which heritage I greatly treasure,
only one wishes that in some real way one might come to see for our day the vision and the largeness of devotion he had for his day, and the total Cause of the Church of Christ!
and this, of course, not to honor our name—or any one congregation,
but to bring honor to Christ's name, whose we are and whom we serve.

(Larger church)

I want to try to see next, whether I can help us see ourselves where we are now.

In Ephesians 5, is the part where the writer likens husband-wife relationships to Christ and His church, and where the writer clearly states: Christ is the head of the church—v. 23,
and the Church—is the body of Christ.

This is a very close relationship; it is more than a relationship of attitudes toward one another—it says clearly that the two are indivisible;
for no body can exist without its head.

The Head gives the direction;
the body carries out the direction given; but that doesn't describe it either, for the two are working together as one unit!
the approach is the same, emphasis is the same; ways of carrying out the work - same.

And yet - we now know there can be the separation between the two;
and the Body can—and has—brought limitations to the Head!
The Body can develop malfunctions, bad practices—
and it can become changed, and even distorted, so that it must be quite different from what Christ wants it to be.

The Body can become broken; and parts of it can be alienated one from the other;
this is what has happened, and we all know it.

Alienation has set in.
the relationships have been broken; estranged one from another, and from Christ.

It has happened without our wanting it; it has often happened unnoticed.

(a) Within the church, people were alienated from each other;
people felt the the church was not where the "action" was;
persons within the church felt - the church was not serving the people, the community.

(Don Bakely - Trenton, N.J.)

(b) Or again, the church was not concerned about the problems people had;
the church was answering questions no one was asking;
it was gathering for worship, yes,
but without concern for the injustices all around it:
injustices to other races;
injustices to the poor.

It seemed to have set aside for the moment—

Christ's great program of Luke 4, which our Lord took from Isaiah, about the Good News being preached to the poor—
about release to captives;
restoring of sight to the blind.

The church had itself developed blind spots;
and the church lost the active, and concerned people,
people who looked for involvement;
people who wanted the Church to "get with it," to become involved.

Thus the church alienated many—

it was too much concerned with its own image;
too complacent - seemingly satisfied if only left alone,
sheltered from the frustrations, and the teeming masses of dissatisfied people,
many of them without hope, without purpose.

(c) So the church alienated many of the young people of today;
largely for reasons already given; youth found the church quite irrelevant to what was going on.

In its own forthrightness, youth wanted to have things "said as they are,"

It wasn't because the church was too strict,
but because the church was not demanding enough,
especially at points of importance:

Youth wasn't so much bothered about maintaining an image;
style of dress, and length of hair—were not of highest priority;
but credibility was;

money and wealth - while necessary to pay bills,
yet it does not seem to Youth that wealth should be all that important so that it runs our lives!

Youth does not believe in double standards; Youth does not go for double-talk; nor for putting on a front.

Youth cannot quite see what we are doing in Vietnam—
is important, necessary
they cannot quite make sense out of it.

(One of your own men, out of this congregation, reported:
even Congressmen take notice when Doug Hostetter speaks,
who has been in V.N. several years; speaks Vietnamese language fluently;

tells congressmen precisely what we are doing over there to the civilian population, men, women, and children.)

How this has come about—

we cannot quite analyze; but suddenly we realize that the Church the Body of Christ, of which He is the Head—is broken; is in need of healing; is alienated, and has alienated people within its own ranks!

This is something of the situation - as we look about us today.

(On the news recently—)

a refreshing witness of a Catholic Brother in Chicago, working, living with the poor in the slums; “learning” from the poor “Learning?” What can you learn from the poor?

I wish I could recall with greater accuracy his answer:

one thing was - “time for celebration,” which the poor have! celebration - of all that God has given us! he found the poor had time for this.

Another was time for “fellowship”—

perhaps the real danger in affluency is some of these things that are crowded out of our lives:

we don't need each other in affluent society;
we want to be left alone!

and our celebration of the Goodness of God - is so often not much deeper than our words that we speak;
for our actions soon prove the shallowness!

I turn to a more positive “Shape of the Church” for the future;

If there are those who ask: “Is there any word from the Lord?”

Answer: “Yes.”

In Acts 4:29, after Peter and John had been released, they went to the church “gathered” in prayer, and this is part of their prayer:

“And now, Lord, look upon their threats, and grant thy servants to speak thy word with boldness”

This marks the early Church: Their prayer was in spite of the threats that Christ's servants might speak with boldness!

1. So, no. I, the church of tomorrow (today) will want to pray for support of its involved people!

It will want to be involved in the problems of the community, in the sense that it will want to give that WORD which God is saying today!

This will take a goodly mixture of (a) being servants of the Lord,
(b) being willing to speak, listen, act for the Lord.

The Church will be a “gathered” church—for worship, and for getting its direction from the Lord with reference to the concerns of people where they live and work,

and this “gathered” Church will then scatter—

not necessarily to all corners of the church: India, Africa, Asia but “scattered” within the community where we work, to be “little Christs”—concerned about our brothers, sisters, concerned about the disfranchised; unemployed, poor; frustrated; “servants of the Lord”—not with any halo about them, but with a combination of quiet-effectiveness, and boldness—
as is mentioned here in Acts 4.

2. The Church will continue to have its creeds, but of much greater importance will be what the church does, and what it is.

(an example: in Washington, D.C.: Church of our Savior;
Junior Village)

Our Lord had a great deal to say about: “not everyone that says, Lord, Lord, but he who does the will of my Father”

He said: there is a first, and greatest commandment: Love God, but a second is like unto it: Love your neighbor as yourself!

The Church of today, and tomorrow that will count, will be the church where its members are clothed and equipped with Love;

Love clothed in flesh and bones! Incarnated love!
This is the kind people can understand.

3. The Church of tomorrow will want to take on anew the servant role! Our Lord's deed of humble service—at the Last Supper, will be taking on new significance;

I do not know whether churches will be reinstating this practice, but its meaning: the Church of tomorrow will seek anew!

(I do not know whether I interpret Judas' troubles and frustrations rightly, but to me it seems that he became greatly disillusioned with Christ exactly at this point: the servant role: and particularly the suffering-servant role.)

He saw Jesus with all His capabilities: feeding the hungry multitude; raising people from the dead; possibilities for a Messiah—to set up a Kingdom:

The Church of tomorrow will be seeing its role—as the servant in the community; the servant of Christ, whose Kingdom was not of this earth;

Christ—Who loved the World; for it was God's world, and God loved it so much that He gave His only Son . . . ! to redeem the world! to be in it, yet not of it!

making disciples of all nations; feeding the lambs, sheep being concerned about the poor and the rich; the outcasts; as well as ministering to those within.

To my mind: the Church has a great future! I don't know about the numbers; but the Church will go forth with boldness!
as did Peter and John, Paul and Silas and Barnabas and Phillip,
and the thousands who have followed in their train!
The next 50 years of Buhler Mennonite Church—
will be spent in doing some of these great and significant things
that are so essential in the Church, Body of Christ!

by Rev. Albert Gaeddert

LIST OF CHARTER MEMBERS

- | | | | |
|---|------------|-----------------|------------|
| 1. Boese, P. F.
12-27-1928 | 7- 2-1880 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 2. Boese, Mrs. Katie | 3-15-1880 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 3. Matthies, F. F.
Tr. to Bethel College Menn. Church 1-26-1953 | 7-18-1880 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 4. Matthies, Mrs. Sara B.
Tr. to Bethel College Menn. Church 1-26-1953 | 7- 2-1887 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 5. Unruh, J. G.
To 1947 | 4-19-1888 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 6. Unruh, Mrs. Sara L.
To 1947 | 12-18-1890 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 7. Buller, H. B. | 6-19-1890 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 8. Buller, Mrs. Anna D. | 1-18-1894 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 9. Quiring, J. C. | 6- 6-1887 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 10. Quiring, Mrs. Paulina | 3- 6-1893 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 11. Flammig, H. H.
Died Aug. 8, 1947 | 9-30-1885 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 12. Flaming, Mrs. Anna | 11- 9-1885 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 13. Vogt, Jacob J. | 9- 6-1872 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 14. Vogt, Mrs. Aganetha | 8-12-1876 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 15. Martens, John
Died 12-15-1921 | 12- 8-1853 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 16. Martens, Mrs. Anna
Died 3-13-1939 | 1- 9-1858 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 17. Bargaen, Mrs. Elisabeth
Died Mar. 5, 1924 | 4- 1-1864 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 18. Ediger, Mrs. Maria | 9-12-1850 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 19. Esau, Nick D.
Died 7-29-69 | 1-30-1882 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 20. Esau, Mrs. Helen A. | 3-21-1889 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 21. Williams, A. J.
Died April 1, 1928 | 9-21-1859 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 22. Williams, Mrs. Maria
Died Mar. 31, 1927 | 7- 2-1861 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 23. Schroeder, Abraham D.
Died August 7, 1963 | 6-18-1907 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 24. Schroeder, Mrs. Katharina | 7-14-1886 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 25. Dyck, Peter J.
Died 10-4-70 | 2-28-1887 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 26. Dyck, Mrs. Maria
Died March 31, 1962 | 3-18-1889 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |
| 27. Balzer, Peter
Died Nov. 9, 1923 | 2-11-1854 | Letter Hoff. Au | 12-27-1920 |

28. Balzer, Mrs. Kathrina	8-27-1876	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Died Sept. 5, 1943			
29. Riemer, Simon	7- 2-1861	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
30. Riemer, Mrs. Anna	3- 5-1866	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Death Nov. 3, 1938			
31. Matthies, Mrs. Katharina	7-13-1857	Letter Hebron	12-27-1920
Death - 1945			
32. Friesen, Cornelius H.	12-10-1859	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Died Apr. 4, 1956			
33. Friesen, Mrs. Helena	11-21-1863	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Died Nov. 17, 1944			
34. Friesen, Henry C.	7-9-1892	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Died 7-15-70			
35. Friesen, Miss Paulina	2-10-1895	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
36. Schmidt, Peter P.	5-15-1861	Letter Bethel Ida	12-27-1920
Died Feb. 23, 1939			
37. Schmidt, Mrs. Anna	11- 1-1872	Letter Bethel Ida	12-27-1920
Tr. to 1945			
38. Friessen, Henry F.	2- 2-1870	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Died Sept. 23, 1944			
39. Friesen, Mrs. Helena	10-10-1883	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
1945			
40. Friesen, Miss Sara	1-30-1896	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
41. Schmidt, Miss Helena	9-25-1898	Letter Bethel Ida.	12-27-1920
42. Friesen, Henry S.	3-24-1902	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
6-3-1935 Aberdeen Menn.			
43. Schmidt, August	12-26-1896	Letter Bethel Id.	12-27-1920
9-19-1932 Meno, Okla.			
44. Dyck, Barnhard C.	7-20-1881	Letter Bethel Id.	12-27-1920
8-31-1930 Alexanderwohl			
45. Dyck, Maria	10-25-1883	Letter Bethel Id.	12-27-1920
46. Buller, Peter B.	2- 3-1858	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
June 11, 1925 Death			
47. Buller, Mrs. Agatha	9-10-1856	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Died May 27, 1927			
48. Regier, John K.	5-23-1853	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Died June 22, 1929			
49. Regier, Mrs. Anna	6- 4-1872	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Death May 22, 1950			
50. Dyck, Mrs. Helena	12-20-1856	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
5-15-1934 Hoff. Au			
51. Ratzlaff, George D.	9-25-1885	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
52. Buller, Jacob H.	3- 2-1878	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
July 17, 1941 - Death			
53. Buller, Mrs. Lena	11-19-1893	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920

54. Fehdrau, Henry W.	1-12-1877	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Death Apr. 5, 195			
55. Fehdrau, Mrs. Katie	12-19-1883	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
56. Thiessen, Jacob	1855	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
57. Thiessen, Sara	1859	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Death Mar. 26, 1923			
58. Thiessen, Isaac	1- 6-1885	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
K.M.B. with Letter			
59. Thiessen, George	10-27-1899	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
60. Schroeder, David D.	9-23-1848	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Death Dec. 10, 1921			
61. Schroeder, Mrs. Magaretha	1-1-1852	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
62. Schroeder, Peter D.	9- 2-1897	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Letter 7-31 Death 5-30-1962			
63. Schroeder, Mary	1-23-1892	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
64. Schroeder, Heinrich	9-24-1887	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Death Jan. 5, 1958			
65. Nachtingal, Jacob P.	10-18-1888	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
66. Nachtingal, Elsie E.	11-18-1892	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
67. Martens, Henry B.	4- 5-1892	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
9-13-1925 Hoff. Au Le			
68. Martens, Lizzie (Mrs.)	10-16-1893	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
9-13-1925 Hoff. Au Le			
69. Buller, Jacob N.	7-31-1860	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Aug. 9, 1943 - Death			
70. Buller, Jacob P.	9-29-1861	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Nov. 14, 1924 - Death			
71. Buller, Mrs. Anna	11-15-1870	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Nov. 11, 1927 - Death			
72. Buller, Herman H.	9- 7-1896	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
73. Buller, Miss Bertha	1-15-1898	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
74. Buller, Miss Martha	1-15-1898	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
9-27-1932 Wichita Menn.			
75. Voth, John J.	5- 9-1874	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Jan. 13, 1923 - Death			
76. Voth, Mrs. Maria	7-23-1871	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Sept. 9, 1957 - Death			
77. Voth, Miss Lena B.	7-10-1897	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
78. Voth, Peter B.	10-17-1899	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
79. Dick, Mrs. K. M.	4-27-	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Died 11-3-69			
80. Nachtingal, Jacob	9- -1860	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
June 12, 1925 - Death			
81. Nachtingal, Mrs. Maria	3-13-1868	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
May 8, 1923 - Death			

82.	Nachtingal, Miss Anna	9- 7-1896	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
83.	Buller, George	11- 6-1883	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
84.	Buller, Mrs. Maria Sept. 8, 1947 - Death	10- 4-1884	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
85.	Ratzlaff, Henry T.	7-14-1879	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
86.	Ratzlaff, Mrs. Katharina May 30, 1938 -Death	5- 2-1882	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
87.	Ratzlaff, Miss Maria	9-16-1886	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
88.	Schmidt, Theodore 10-21-1935 Bethesda	3-25-1900	Letter Bethel Ida	12-27-1920
89.	Regier, Jacob B. Removed 1950	1- 8-1887	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
90.	Regier, Mrs. Lizzie	8-29-1887	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
91.	Voth, Henry J. 1940 - Death	5-24-1885	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
92.	Voth, Mrs. Mary 12-27-70 - Death	1-30-1887	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
93.	Schroeder, Jacob Nov. 8, 1949 - Death	6- 2-1871	Letter Hoff. Au	12-17-1920
94.	Schroeder, Mrs. Agness 1940 - Death	3-29-1875	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
95.	Schroeder, Miss Anna June 19, 1926 - Death	5-28-1917	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
96.	Dyck, Mrs. Maria	1- 9-1878	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
97.	Wall, Abraham B. Died on March 3, 1969	9- 1-1881	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
98.	Wall, Mrs. Maria Mar. 7, 1944 - Death	12- 1-1882	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
99.	Wall, John	7-12-1894	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
100.	Voth, Mrs. Helena May 11, 1931 - Death	1- 9-1855	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
101.	Gaeddert, Mrs. Helena	6-30-1858	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
102.	Gaeddert, Henry B. 11-14-1944 to Lorraine Menn. Wichita, Kan.	11-12-1891	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
103.	Schroeder, David M.	10- 4-1883	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
104.	Schroeder, Mrs. Katharina	8-4-1888	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
105.	Martens, Abraham B. 11-18-70 - Death	3-25-1879	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
106.	Martens, Mrs. Katie May 12, 1935 - Death	2-22-1882	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
107.	Martens, Nick B. June 6, 1946 - Death	9-7-1897	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
108.	Martens, Mrs. Lizzie Tr. to 1st Menn. Hutch. Jan. 30, 1955	12-27-1898	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
109.	Matthies, George 6-4-1934 Halstead Menn.	6-23-1894	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920

110.	Matthies, Mrs. Mary 6-4-1934 Halstead Menn.	3-18-1897	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
111.	Wall, Klass Sr. April 20, 1927 - Death	1-14-1850	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
112.	Wall, Mrs. Elisabeth Oct. 24, 1946 - Death	5- 9-1854	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
113.	Wall, Peter	1-28-1889	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
114.	Wall, Mrs. Mary M.	5-24-1891	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
115.	Wall, Klass Jr. Sept. 12, 1952 - Death	6- 4-1886	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
116.	Voth, George H. 6-15-1924 Hebron Menn.	7-11-1895	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
117.	Buller, David 1st Menn. Newton, Kan. June 23, 1944	3- 5-1872	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
118.	Buller, Katharina 1st Menn. Newton, Kan. June 23, 1944	7-26-1878	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
119.	Johnson, William W. Mar. 13, 1925 - Death	6- 6-1859	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
120.	Johnson, Mrs. Helena May 20, 1948 - Death	2-28-1860	Letter Hoff, Au	12-27-1920
121.	Nachtingal, Jacob M.	6- 7-1893	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
122.	Nachtingal, Peter F. 1-18-1937 First Menn., Newton, Kan.	9- 2-1897	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
123.	Nachtingal, John	2-21-1892	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
124.	Schmidt, Miss Anna Evang Menn Henderson, Neb. June 2, 1944	12-24-1902	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
125.	Johnson, Miss Sara	6-14-1898	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
126.	Dyck, Miss Katherine 4-16-1924 Hebron Menn.	4-17-1901	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
127.	Williams, Miss Eva Mar. 22, 1953 - Death	2- 5-1897	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
128.	Williams, Miss Lena	10-12-1899	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
129.	Williams, Miss Agness Apr. 10, 1946 - Death	4-30-1887	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
130.	Siemens, John F. 2-3-1859 June 8, 1931 - Death	Letter First Menn. Reedley		12-27-1920
131.	Siemens, Mrs. Sarah Sept. 16, 1929 - Death	12-16-1860	Letter First Menn. Reedley	12-27-20
132.	Siemens, Miss Lydia	2-6-1902	Letter First Menn. Reedley	12-27-20
133.	Siemens, Miss Maria	9-25-1886	Letter First Menn. Reedley	12-27-20
134.	Riemer, Adolf A. Without letter to M. B. Church Buhler	1-29-1897	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
135.	Schmidt, Abraham R.	11-26-1893	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
136.	Schmidt, Mrs. Katie	6-10-1893	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920

137. Voth, Peter R.	2-25-1870	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
8-22-1937 to Bethel College Mennonite			
138. Voth, Mrs. Anna E.	9-14-1868	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
8-22-1937 to Bethel College Mennonite			
139. Dirks, Jacob B.	6-19-1938	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Jan. 7, 1933 - Death			
140. Friesen, Adolf	9- 3-1897	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
7-21-1930 Summerfield (Ill.) Church			
141. Dick, Abraham M.	7-27-1882	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Jan. 27, 1947 - Death			
142. Dick, Mrs. Sara	4-10-1885	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
1940 - Death			
143. Johnson, Peter	1-28-1889	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
May 21, 1952 - Death			
144. Johnson, Mrs. Lizzie	2- 7-1893	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
May 3, 1967 - Death			
145. Gaeddert, John H.	12-21-1894	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Lorraine Ave. Menn. Wichita Oct. 14, 1944			
146. Schmidt, Alvin	7-29-1895	Letter Bethel Ida	12-27-1920
Died on March 12, 1969			
147. Schmidt, Mrs. Maria	8-23-1896	Letter Bethel Ida	12-27-1920
148. Wiens, John J.	7-13-1885	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
149. Wiens, Mrs. Ida	6- 2-1888	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
150. Riemer, John A.	11-19-1899	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Died 8-29-1966			
151. Friesen, Peter	1-22-1890	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
12-14-1928 Lutheran Church, Dodge City, Kan.			
152. Dyck, Miss Anna	1-17-1903	Baptism	12-27-1920
153. Schroeder, Henry J.	6-18-1900	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
4-25-1938 First Menn. Hutchinson, Kan.			
154. Nachtingal, George A.	2-15-1899	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Meth., Englewood, Kan. May 17, 1939			
155. Gaeddert, Rosina (Miss)	9-30-1896	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
156. Buller, Miss Maria	9-29-1891	Letter Hoff. Au	12-27-1920
Died August 4, 1968			

OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH THE PAST 50 YEARS

PASTORS

1920 - 1933 - Rev. P. R. Voth
 1924 - Rev. A. J. Dyck
 1933 - 1938 - Rev. J. M. Suderman
 1939 - 1941 - Rev. John F. Schmidt
 1941 - 1942 - Rev. A. E. Kreider, Interim Pastor
 1942 - 1953 - Rev. Henry Fransen
 1953 - 1954 - Rev. P. K. Regier, Interim Pastor
 1954 - 1961 - Rev. Irvin E. Richert
 1961 - 1962 - Rev. P. K. Regier, Interim Pastor
 1962 - 1970 - Rev. Harold D. Thieszen

CHURCH PRESIDENTS

J. J. Voth, temporary chairman from December 14, 1919, to March 19, 1920.
 Rev. P. R. Voth, elected March 19, 1920, and continued as chairman until December 28, 1929.
 F. F. Matthies, elected as chairman, December 28, 1929, and served until December 30, 1936.
 J. C. Regier, elected as chairman, December 30, 1936, and served until December, 1943.
 Ben E. Kim, elected as chairman, December, 1943, and served until December, 1945.
 F. F. Matthies, elected December, 1945, and served one year, till December, 1946.
 Ben E. Kim, elected in December, 1946, and served until December, 1950.
 John D. Schmidt, elected in December, 1950, and served until December, 1954.
 Herbert W. Buller, elected in December, 1954, and served until December, 1958.
 Curt Siemens, elected in December, 1958, and served until December, 1960.
 John D. Schmidt, elected in December, 1960, and served until December, 1962.
 Albert C. Becker, elected in December, 1962, and served until October, 1968.
 Edward J. Voth, elected in October, 1968, and has served since.

DEACONS WHO HAVE SERVED SINCE 1920

J. F. Siemens	Elmer D. Schroeder	Henry E. Ediger
P. P. Schmidt	John D. Schmidt	Homer R. Goertzen
H. B. Buller	P. R. Gaeddert	Orlando J. Friesen
J. B. Regier	H. C. Friesen	Reuben J. Goering
Alvin Schmidt	Albert C. Becker	Eldo Regier
Ben E. Kim	Julian A. Johnson	Vernon Buller

TRUSTEES

1921	1926	1931
J. P. Buller	J. J. Bargaen	George Buller
F. F. Matthies	N. D. Esau	D. C. Heidebrecht
J. B. Regier	G. W. Janzen	G. W. Janzen
J. G. Unruh	A. B. Martens	J. C. Regier
A. B. Wall	D. M. Schroeder	Henry Schroeder
1922	1927	1932
F. F. Matthies	N. D. Esau	George Buller
J. B. Regier	G. W. Janzen	D. C. Heidebrecht
J. G. Unruh	A. B. Martens	G. W. Janzen
A. B. Wall	D. M. Schroeder	W. B. Johnson
A. J. Williams	Henry Schroeder	J. C. Regier
1923	1928	1933
Gerhard Bergen	N. D. Esau	J. J. Becker
F. F. Matthies	G. W. Janzen	George Buller
J. G. Unruh	A. B. Martens	D. C. Heidebrecht
J. J. Voth	D. M. Schroeder	W. B. Johnson
A. B. Wall	Henry Schroeder	J. C. Regier
1924	1929	1934
P. J. Dyck	N. D. Esau	J. J. Becker
F. F. Matthies	G. W. Janzen	George Buller
D. M. Schroeder	A. B. Martens	D. C. Heidebrecht
J. J. Voth	J. C. Regier	G. W. Janzen
A. B. Wall	Henry Schroeder	W. B. Johnson
1925	1930	1935
F. F. Matthies	George Buller	J. J. Becker
H. T. Ratzlaff	G. W. Janzen	George Buller
D. M. Schroeder	A. B. Martens	D. C. Heidebrecht
A. J. Williams	J. C. Regier	G. W. Janzen
	Henry Schroeder	W. B. Johnson

1936	1943	1950
J. J. Becker	Nick Martens	George Buller
D. C. Heidebrecht	F. F. Matthies	Vernon Buller
G. W. Janzen	Harold M. Regier	Arthur B. Froese
W. B. Johnson	Henry Schroeder	F. F. Matthies
J. C. Regier	Herman Voth	Harold M. Regier
1937	1944	1951
J. J. Becker	F. F. Matthies	George Buller
G. W. Janzen	Harold M. Regier	Vernon Buller
W. B. Johnson	D. M. Schroeder	Arthur B. Froese
F. F. Matthies	Henry Schroeder	Ben E. Kim
J. C. Regier	Herman Voth	F. F. Matthies
1938	1945	1952
J. J. Becker	Curt Ediger	George Buller
G. W. Janzen	F. F. Matthies	Vernon Buller
F. F. Matthies	Harold M. Regier	Arthur B. Froese
J. C. Regier	D. M. Schroeder	Ben E. Kim
John W. Zielke	Herman Voth	F. F. Matthies
1939	1946	1953
G. W. Janzen	Curt Ediger	George Buller
Nick Martens	F. F. Matthies	Vernon Buller
F. F. Matthies	Harold M. Regier	Arthur B. Froese
J. C. Regier	D. M. Schroeder	Ben E. Kim
John W. Zielke	Herman Voth	Herman Siemens
1940	1947	1954
Nick Martens	George Buller	George Buller
F. F. Matthies	Curt Ediger	Vernon Buller
J. C. Regier	Harold M. Regier	Ben E. Kim
Henry Schroeder	D. M. Schroeder	Herman Siemens
John W. Zielke	Herman Voth	J. H. Siemens
1941	1948	1955
Nick Martens	George Buller	George Buller
F. F. Matthies	Curt Ediger	Ben Kim
Harold M. Regier	F. F. Matthies	Herman Siemens
Henry Schroeder	Harold M. Regier	J. H. Siemens
John W. Zielke	D. M. Schroeder	Arnold H. Zielke
1942	1949	1956
Nick Martens	George Buller	George Buller
F. F. Matthies	Curt Ediger	Joel Reimer
Harold M. Regier	Arthur B. Froese	Herman Siemens
Henry Schroeder	F. F. Matthies	J. H. Siemens
John W. Zielke	Harold M. Regier	Arnold H. Zielke

1957	1962	1967
Arthur B. Froese	Richard Dick	William A. Buller
Joel Reimer	William Dunn	Leo Ediger
Herman Siemens	Ray Siemens	Ed L. Regier
J. H. Siemens	Herman Voth	Joel Reimer
Arnold H. Zielke	John W. Zielke	Alfred Schmidt
1958	1963	1968
Arthur B. Froese	Richard Dick	William A. Buller
Joel Reimer	William Dunn	Ed L. Regier
Harold M. Regier	Leo Ediger	Joel Reimer
J. H. Siemens	Ray Siemens	Alfred Schmidt
Arnold H. Zielke	Herman Voth	Herman Voth
1959	1964	1969
Arthur B. Froese	Richard Dick	William A. Buller
Joel Reimer	William Dunn	Leo Ediger
Harold M. Regier	Leo Ediger	E. L. Regier
Ray Siemens	Joel Reimer	Alfred Schmidt
Arnold H. Zielke	Herman Voth	Herman Voth
1960	1965	1970
William Dunn	William A. Buller	Leo Ediger
Arthur B. Froese	Leo Ediger	Ed L. Regier
Joel Reimer	Joel Reimer	Joel Reimer
Ray Siemens	Alfred Schmidt	Alfred Schmidt
John W. Zielke	Herman Voth	Herman Voth
1961	1966	1971
Richard Dick	William A. Buller	Allen Bartel
William Dunn	Leo Ediger	Leo Ediger
Arthur B. Froese	Ed L. Regier	Joel Reimer
Ray Siemens	Joel Reimer	Alfred Schmidt
John W. Zielke	Herman Voth	Herman Voth

SUNDAY SCHOOL AND JUNIOR SUPERINTENDENT

<i>Year</i>	<i>Superintendent and Assistant</i>	<i>Junior Superintendent and Assistant</i>
1913	C. H. Friesen was the first Superintendent when the first church was built.	
1914	John Martens was the second Superintendent	
1919-20	F. F. Matthies	
1920-21	P. P. Flaming	
1921-22	H. A. Ratzlaff	
1922-23	H. H. Flaming	
1923-24	H. B. Buller	
1924-25	J. C. Regier	H. B. Buller
1925-26	H. B. Buller	J. C. Regier
1926-27	P. J. Dyck	
1927-28	P. J. Dyck	
1928-29	P. J. Dyck	
1929-30	G. A. Nachtigall	J. C. Regier
1930-31	J. C. Regier	
1931-32	J. C. Regier	
1932-33	J. C. Regier	
1933-34	J. C. Regier	
1934-35	J. C. Regier	
1935-36	J. C. Regier	
1936-37	H. W. Buller	J. C. Regier
1937-38	H. W. Buller	J. A. Reimer
1938-39	H. W. Buller	J. A. Reimer
1939-40	Curt Reimer	H. C. Friesen
1940-41	Ben E. Kim	Eldo Regier
		J. G. Unruh

<i>Year</i>	<i>Superintendent and</i>	<i>Assistant</i>	<i>Junior Superintendent and</i>	<i>Assistant</i>
1941-42	Ben E. Kim	J. A. Reimer		
1942-43	H. W. Buller	Elmer D. Schroeder		
1943-44	Ben E. Kim	Mrs. Lena Wedel		
1944-45	Ben E. Kim	H. W. Buller	Mrs. Lena Wedel	
1945-46	John D. Schmidt	Elmer D. Schroeder	Mrs. Lena Wedel	
1946-47	John D. Schmidt	Herbert H. Regier	Mrs. Art M. Ediger	
1947-48	John D. Schmidt	Arnold B. Baergen	Mrs. Art M. Ediger	
		Acting Asst.—		
1948-49	Albert C. Becker	Herbert H. Regier	Mrs. Art M. Ediger	Mrs. J. J. Franz
1949-50	Albert C. Becker	Herbert H. Regier	Mrs. John J. Franz	Mrs. Arnold Wall
1950-51	Albert C. Becker	William Dunn	Rosa Kim	Mrs. Arnold Wall
1951-52	Albert C. Becker	J. A. Johnson	Rosa Kim	Mrs. Arnold Wall
1952-53	Elmer D. Schroeder	J. A. Johnson	Mrs. Lena Wedel	Mrs. Art M. Ediger
1953-54	Elmer D. Schroeder	J. A. Johnson	Mrs. Lena Wedel	Mrs. Art M. Ediger
1954-55	Elmer D. Schroeder	J. A. Johnson	Mrs. Lena Wedel	Mrs. Ray Siemens
1955-56	Vernon Buller	J. A. Johnson	Mrs. Lena Wedel	Mrs. J. H. Siemens
1956-57	Vernon Buller	J. A. Johnson	Mrs. Lena Wedel	Mrs. William Dunn
1957-58	Elmer D. Schroeder	Curt Siemens	Mrs. Homer Goertzen	Mrs. Herman Voth
1958-59	Elmer D. Schroeder	Eldo Regier	Mrs. Homer Goertzen	Mrs. Art M. Ediger
1959-60	Elmer D. Schroeder	Eldo Regier	Mrs. Homer Goertzen	Mrs. Art M. Ediger
1960-61	Victor Krehbiel	Reuben Goering	Mrs. Art M. Ediger	Mrs. John R. Dyck
1961-62	Reuben Goering	P. S. Shellenberger	Mrs. Robert Jones	Mrs. Art M. Ediger
1962-63	Reuben Goering	P. S. Shellenberger	Mrs. Robert Jones	Mrs. Art M. Ediger
1963-64	John Lee Zielke	James K. Lohrentz	Mrs. John R. Dyck	Mrs. Albert Schroeder

1964-65	John Lee Zielke	James K. Lohrentz	Mrs. John R. Dyck	Mrs. John F. Regier
1965-66	Elmer D. Schroeder	Harold M. Balzer	Mrs. John R. Dyck	Mrs. Eugene Seachris
1966-67	Elmer D. Schroeder	Harold M. Balzer	Mrs. Orlando Friesen	Mrs. Keith Dirks
1967-68	Elmer D. Schroeder	James K. Lohrentz	Mrs. Orlando Friesen	Mrs. Keith Dirks
1968-69	Harlo Schmidt	P. S. Shellenberger	Mrs. Orlando Friesen	Mrs. Keith Dirks
1969-70	Harlo Schmidt	Milford Lohrentz	Mrs Robert Janzen	Mrs. Ray Schroeder
1970-71	Harlo Schmidt	Milford Lohrentz	Mrs Robert Janzen	Mrs. Ray Schroeder

GREETINGS

Dear Friends:

We greet you with Psalm 67 as well as with a bouquet of flowers.

Psalm 67:

God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.

Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee, O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth, Selah. Let the people praise thee; let all the people praise thee.

Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; and all the ends of the earth shall fear him.

THE HOFFNUNGSAU CHURCH
Rev. Dick Rempel

Dear friends in the Lord:

We rejoice with you on this festive Sunday, the 50th anniversary of your congregation, and pray that God will richly bless you in worship and fellowship.

We greet you with the words of the Psalmist, "The name of Jacob's God be your tower of strength, give you help from the sanctuary and send you support from Zion! May he remember all your offerings and look with favor on your rich sacrifices, give you your heart's desire and grant success to all your plans!" Psalm 20:2-4.

Sincerely Yours, in Him

Nick Rempel

From the Buhler Mennonite Brethren Church

Dear Friends in the Lord:

On your Golden Jubilee, we greet you with the following words:

How lovely is the story

Your Book of years does tell,

For you have served the Master

So faithfully and well,

And may this golden chapter

Most truly bring to you

His sweetest, finest blessings,

His richest graces, too.

With many thoughts and wishes on this happy occasion.

The Hebron Mennonite Church

Dear Friends:

We take this occasion to send greetings to you upon the observance of the 50th Anniversary of your church. We are happy to join you in praise and thanksgiving to God upon reaching this golden event.

In view of God's gracious design for His Church, we join the prophet of old when he spoke to Israel, "Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded." IIChronicles 15:7.

With sincerest best wishes,
C. F. Plett, Administrator
Sunshine Home

Dear Dr. Wedel:

I have just learned of the observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the Buhler Mennonite Church in Buhler, Kansas. I want to join in extending my personal best wishes to you upon reaching this important milestone in the history of your Church.

The church remains one of the keystones of a democratic society. I know that the Buhler Mennonite Church of Buhler has played a significant role in the spiritual life of its members throughout its fifty year history. Both its members and the community are sure to receive important contributions from the Church in the years that lie ahead.

May God bless you as you continue your important mission.

Sincerely,
Garner E. Shriver
Member of Congress

Dear Buhler Mennonite Church:

It was kind and thoughtful of you to extend an invitation to Sally (Selma) and me—and to my brothers as well—to attend the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Buhler Mennonite Church on April 18 of this year. Photocopies of your letter and the program of the day have been sent to my brothers. Menno and Bertha reside in retirement at 906 So. Bross St., Longmont, Colo., 80501. Rudy (Rudolf) and Evelyn continue their careers in psychological counseling and in music, respectively. The Protestant chapel at McChord Field depends heavily on both of them for the service of music. They reside at 11202 Tower Road S.W., Tacoma, Washington 98498.

The Buhler Mennonite Church remains in my memory as a significant and essentially happy component of my formative years and an enduring influence for good to this day.

The Reverend P. R. Voth, my father, enjoyed a fruitful and long retirement which was more serene than would have been the case had he not had the satisfaction of serving the Church. Even through disappointments he would refer to his best efforts as the "work in the vineyard."

It is my firm belief that the Buhler Mennonite Church has proclaimed the Word of God in a manner which has transcended change of language and the transition to a technocratic society. You have been the positive influence which, combined with the efforts of sister congregations and with the Christians of other denominations is now leading to the soul-searching of our nation in its relation to war and the opulent society.

Sincerely yours,
Paul D. Voth

Dear Friends:

On Sunday, April 18, we shall, in spirit, rejoice with you as you observe your fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Buhler Mennonite Church. You have worshiped together during these years; you have given witness to the saving grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; you have upheld the teachings of the Holy Scriptures that have come down to us from our Anabaptist forefathers. We pray that God's continued blessing may be with you.

We cherish memories from the time when I served as a supply minister. Many years have passed since then. We have now taken up residence in Greencroft Retirement Villa, Goshen, Indiana, and for our age we enjoy good health.

Although we will not be able to be present for the anniversary services, our thoughts and prayers will be with you. And we are most grateful for the invitation to join you in the observance of the anniversary.

Most sincerely
Rev. and Mrs. A. E. Kreider
Goshen, Indiana

Dear Friends:

It was indeed a pleasant surprise to receive the invitation to the Fiftieth Anniversary of The Buhler Mennonite Church. Many fond memories welled up in our hearts as we thought of our years in Buhler. There was a strong inclination to attend this monumental occasion.

Let us assure you that we will be with you in spirit on that day. With you, we thank God that he has blessed The Buhler Mennonite Church and allowed it to witness for the past fifty years. May this witness become even stronger in the years ahead. The world today sorely needs the gospel of Jesus Christ as it was interpreted by the founders of our faith.

On this occasion we extend warm greetings to all members and friends of The Buhler Mennonite Church, to the ministers who have served there in the past and to Rev. D. C. Wedel.

In closing we would admonish us all with the words of the writer of Hebrews: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely

and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith" Heb. 12:1-2.

With Christian greetings,
Henry and Othielia Fransen
St. Catharines, Ontario

Thank you for your thoughtful and kind invitation to share with you the 50th Anniversary of the Buhler Mennonite Church. We are sorry we cannot be present on this special and joyous occasion.

Though it is not the Christmas season, yet I am reminded of the wisemen who looked for the Christchild and when they had found Him they presented Him with their gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh.

In a real sense the Buhler congregation has presented its gift of gold, to our Lord Jesus Christ - 50 years of service. I am filled with joy knowing that we were permitted to share seven years with you—seven years out of the Golden 50.

May God richly bless you and make you a blessing as you begin the second 50 years.

In His Service,
Rev. Irvin E. and Shirley Richert and family

GREETINGS:

O give thanks to the LORD, call on his name,
make known his deeds among the peoples!
Sing to him, sing praises to him,
tell of all his wonderful works!

Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice!

Seek the LORD and his strength,
seek his presence continually!

Remember the wonderful works that he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he uttered, . . .

He is the LORD our God; . . .

Praise the LORD! (Psalm 105:1-5; 7a; 45b)

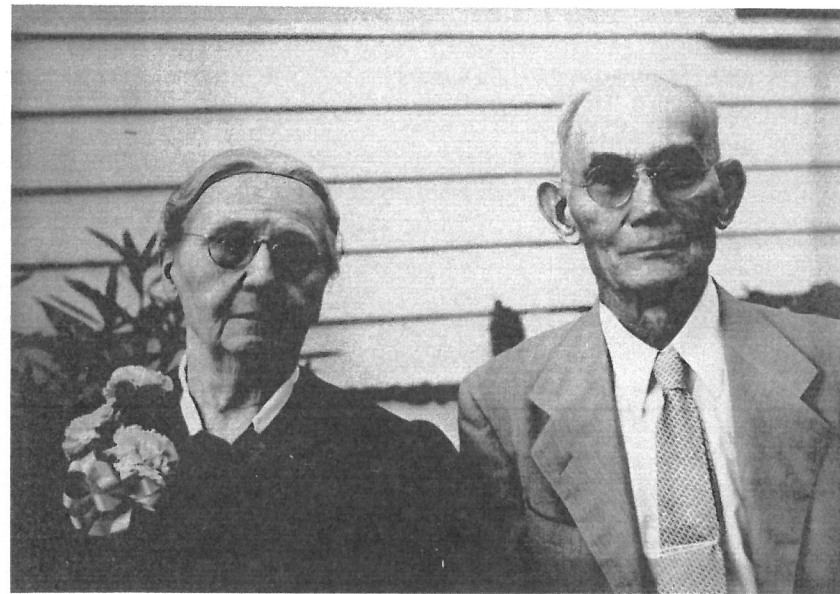
"A DAY OF PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING" is an occasion for rejoicing. Rejoicing that under the grace of God you have been for Fifty Years. For Fifty Years you have worshiped at 220 West Avenue B, Buhler, Kansas. For Fifty Years you have been coming and going from this place. For Fifty Years you have given and received inspiration to each other as members of this fellowship, however, there were times amid the rejoicing when inspiration and fellowship were not shared. May God grant forgiveness and thanksgiving for renewed fellowship and service

in the years to come. The love and joy of Christian fellowship be yours.
"May the grace of Christ which daily renews our lives, and the love of God which enables us to love all men, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit which unites us in one body, make us keen to discern and prompt to obey the complete will of God until we meet again, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

In Christian Love and Fellowship,
Harold and Esther Thieszen
Jon, Kathryn and Barbara

PICTURES

MINISTERS WHO SERVED THIS CHURCH



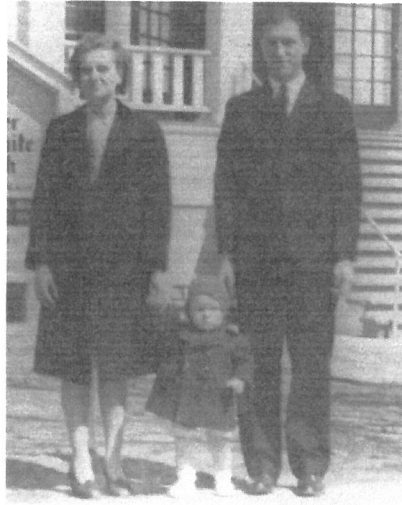
Rev. and Mrs. P. R. Voth

Rev. and Mrs. J. M. Suderman





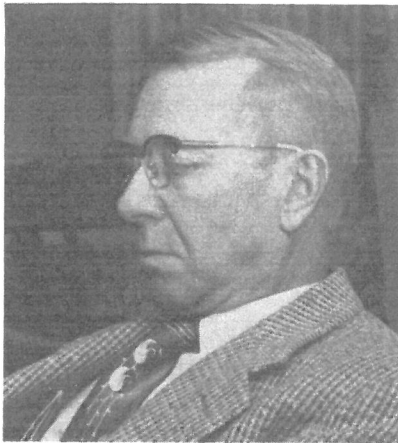
Rev. John F. Schmidt



Rev. and Mrs. Henry Fransen



Rev. Irvin E. Richert



Rev. P. K. Regier

Rev. Harold D. Thiesen



Rev. David C. Wedel



PICTURES OF MISSIONARIES AND ORDAINED MINISTERS

ORDAINED MISSIONARIES



Rev. Harold and Ruth Ratzlaff



Mrs. Arline Friesen Allen



Rev. and Mrs. Roland Friesen

Rev. and Mrs. Bob Bogema



Rev. and Mrs. Paul Friesen



ORDAINED MINISTERS



Rev. and Mrs. Delton Franz



Rev. and Mrs. Orlando Schmidt



Rev. Curt Siemens

LIVING CHARTER MEMBER COUPLES



Mr. and Mrs. John J. Wiens
Mr. and Mrs. D. M. Schroeder

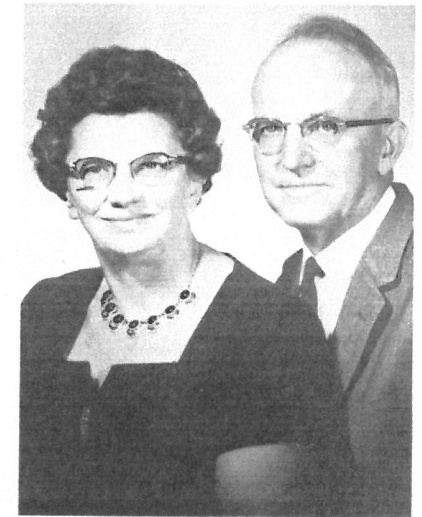




Mr. and Mrs. Peter Wall



Mr. and Mrs. John Buller



Mr. and Mrs. Peter B. Voth

CUSTODIANS

Mr. and Mrs. Peter P. Schmidt

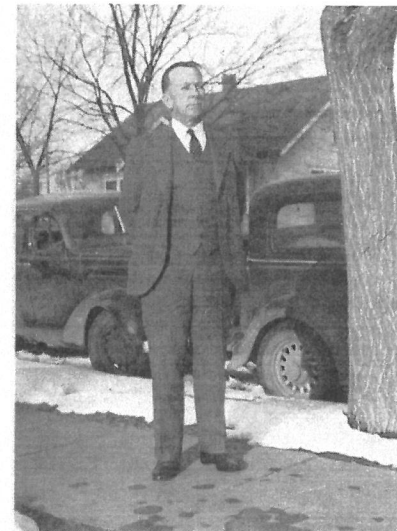


Mr. and Mrs. Frank F. Matthies



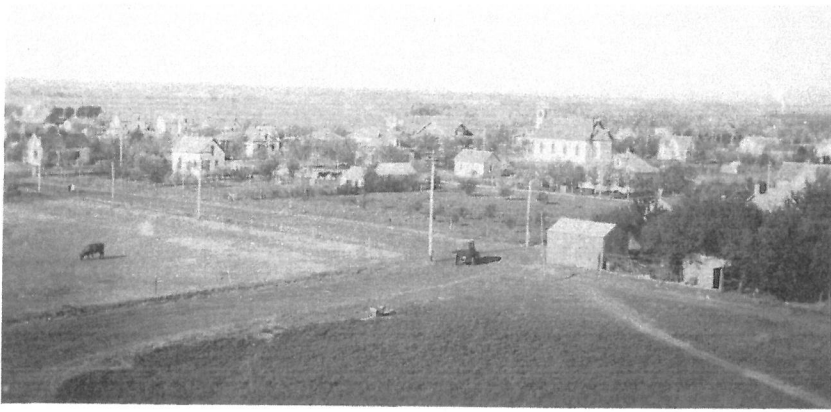
PICTURES OF GENERAL INTEREST

J. C. Regier

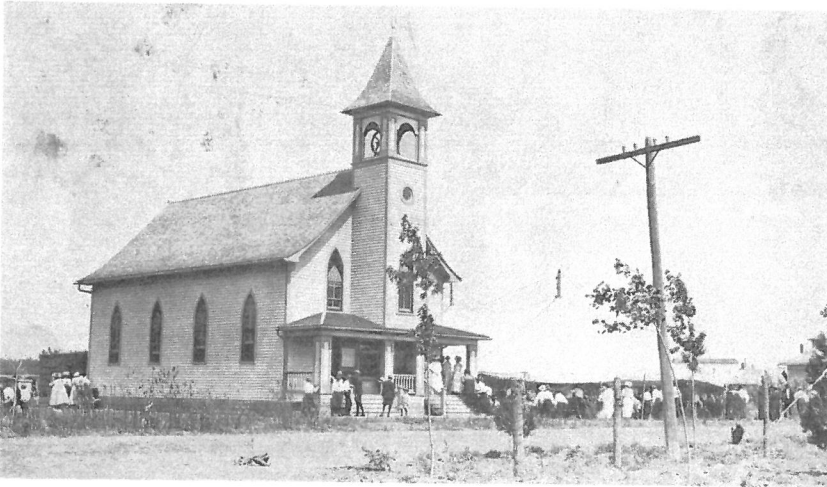


Mrs. J. C. Regier



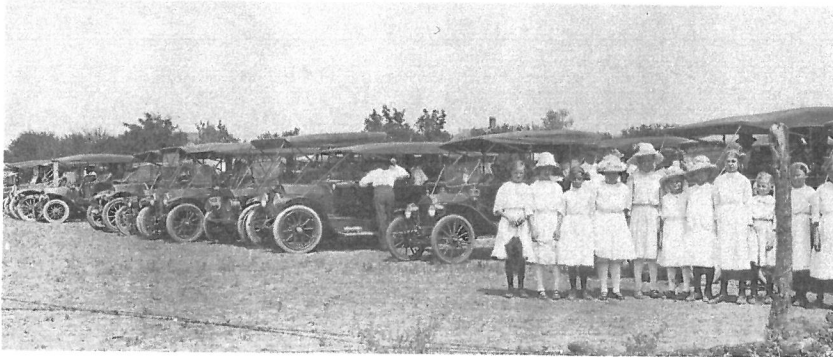


Scene surrounding the old Church building in the 1920's

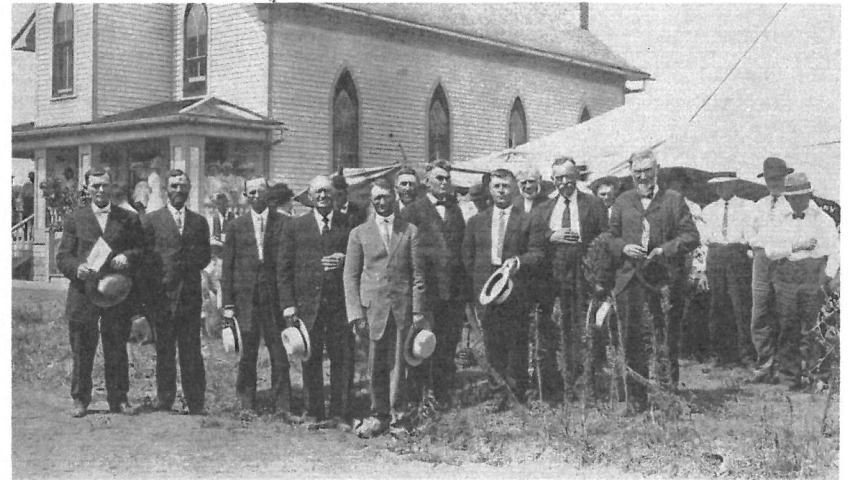


1913 Church at Conference Time

Cars at 1913 Dedication



The very first choir



Dedication of the first church building, Sept. 7, 1913

First wedding in the church of 1927—Mr. and Mrs. John J. Franz





The interior of the 1913 church

Interior of 1913 church



View of 1927 Church Building



View of the 1913 church building from top of Buhler mill and elevator

