



The Weaver

History of the Weavers Church

by Glendon Blosser

What do you remember from last Sunday? 5 years ago? Or the Christmas when you were young? It can often become difficult to remember the details of our everyday lives. Think about how helpful it would be to have a record of the important events written in a book.

What about the history of Weavers church? It will soon be 185 years since the first log church was built with continuous worship services. It is a big project but think about the legacy that a book will bring to today's and tomorrow's generations.

James O. Lehman, archivist for Virginia Conference, has

already written six congregational histories and is available for one more before he lays down his pen (or computer). He says, "Weavers is a key congregation with a prominent and significant role in Virginia Mennonite history for nearly two hundred years. There must have been a congregation here for a number of years before 1826-27 when the first meetinghouse was built, which was first called Burkholders before it was called Weavers."

Weavers church has a progressive history that shows many firsts in the way it has kept up with the times: first sewing circle, first Sunday schools, first church building



Drawing by Donna Shank, 1989

with a furnace, first credentialed woman in the conference, just to mentioned a few. Of course there is the story of the Old Order Mennonites (the horse and buggy people) that left the church over a century ago and have remained much the same with their worship and life style issues.

Weavers continues as a strong

October/November

2009

Upcoming Events

- November 22, Noon Thanksgiving Fellowship Meal
- Thursday, November 26 Thanksgiving Day
- Walk-Through-Bethlehem, December 19, 20

Walking Through the Valley

by Gordon Zook

Thoughts at Memorial Service, Oct 18, 2009 for my grandson, Rein Zook, Aug 5, 05 – Oct 10, 09

As a pastor, I proclaim with the Apostle Paul that, indeed, we do not grieve as

those who have no hope. There is something instinctive that says life goes on, if not in this existence, in some transcending world. With the death and resurrection of Christ, we believe that we and our loved ones also par-

ticipate in a life that never ends, even though it is so achingly interrupted by the loss we feel now.

As a grandfather, I identify with the ancient Job who found himself suddenly be-



A History, *continued*



Everyone will be needed to help this project to completion

congregation with its 339 members and its three pastors to serve the children, youth, young adults, families and older adults. It is noted today for its blended worship, a strong emphasis on service and missions and its quarterly fellowship meals.

What does it take to write a history? Much research will be needed to be sure that the primary sources are used and the stories that are still alive will be told true to fact. Photographs and artifacts will be considered useful when the bits and pieces of Weavers events and information are collected. In order for all this to happen the writer has said that “I would only consider researching and writing a history for Weavers if

I have one or several mature assistant(s) who could do significant searching and basic intensive work under my direction”. Thanks to Becky Leichty and Glendon Blosser who have made themselves available on a volunteer basis.

But everyone will be needed to help this project come to completion. It will take finances to pay the writer, an editor, a layout person, printing, photocopying, etc. The projections are that it will take around \$17,500 to cover the costs. Sales of books will cover a portion.

The church council has approved the project with it being financed with donations. This can easily be done if we see this project as one that we can all be partners. A special account will be established as the “Weavers History Project”. Please consider how you would like to be a part of this once in a life time event. Your gifts over a three year period are encouraged.

Walking Through the Valley, *continued*

reft of livestock and workers and, most grievously, of all his children. Job’s question then and our question now is “Why?” What did Job or his family do to deserve such a fate then? What did Rein or his family do to deserve it now?

And the answer remains just as mysterious. With Job, I want

Job’s question then and our question now is “Why?” . . . And the answer remains just as mysterious.

to file a complaint (Job 10:1 ff). But where is the venue for such litigation? Who can arbitrate? How do you bring charges against the Eternal? (9:32-33) And what does the eternal one have against us? (10:2)

The overwhelming feeling is helplessness. It leaves a horrible taste. Job said it this way (23:2-7)

Even today my complaint is bitter;
His hand is heavy in spite of my groaning.
If only I knew where to find him;
If only I could go to his dwelling!

I would state my case before him
And fill my mouth with arguments,

I would find out what he would answer me,
and consider what he would say.

Would he oppose me with great power?
No, he would not press charges against me.
There an upright person
could present a case before him,
and I would be delivered forever from my judge.

In his grief, Job felt abandoned, and so do we. In our loss, we know only frustration. It doesn’t make sense. The timing is all wrong. No one should die so young. Why should one so innocent be deprived of life, when so many bad people run free?

Ultimately with Job, we conclude there is no satisfying answer. At best, life and death is a mystery, and we try to cherish life as we have opportunity. I am grateful that this difficult book, perhaps the oldest literature in the Bible, has been preserved to reassure us that we are not alone in feeling frustration and bitterness at this time of loss. I am also grateful for other scriptures where we feel the closeness and caring of the Eternal One. One of the earliest scriptures we read to children, yet a favorite for all ages, is the 23rd Psalm, where the eternal Lord, is depicted as a shepherd caring for his flock, in which all of us may find a place.

The Lord is my Shepherd,
I shall not be in want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures,





Through the Valley, *continued*

he leads me beside quiet waters.
He restores my soul.
He guides me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the
valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil,
For you are with me;

When all else is in turmoil; when our
lives are upside down; when we are
transitioning from one stage of existence
to another, we have a shepherd
who shows us the way and leads us
where the waters are quiet and the
grass is green.

Sometimes, I fantasize about how I
would handle things if I were God.
Thank goodness I am not, and it is
arrogant to even suppose.

But if I were God, I would be a
rescue hero. No one would ever get
hurt. If someone were falling, I would
catch them before they hit the ground.
If they were drowning, I would pull
them to shore and administer mouth
to mouth. If they had a genetic mutation,
I would do a bone marrow transplant,
and all would live happily ever after.

Sometimes astounding things do happen,
but so infrequently that when they do,
we call it a miracle. For most of life,
however, we are subject to accidents,
to illnesses, to losses. At the same
time we find joy in human love, in
family life, in exploring the universe,
in enjoying beauty of every sort.

And it is then we discover that God is
not so much a rescue hero, but one
who walks closely with us, precisely
through our valleys. And even though
it may be hard to see in our grief, I
believe the Lord has been with Rein

and us, sharing our tears, in these past years. And that he will stay close as the
journey goes on, both in this world and the next.

Indeed, that is the meaning of the name God gave to his divine son sent to live
among us:

confined to a human body,
subject to hunger and fatigue,
weeping at the passing of a friend,
suffering an excruciating death.

His name shall be "God With Us," the angel told his father-to-be. "Emmanuel"—
the God who is with us! Even through the valley of the shadow of death!

**"And it is then we discover that God is not so much a
rescue hero, but one who walks closely with us,
precisely through our valleys."**

Robotics as Competition

Daniel Rittenhouse participated in the Technology Student Association
Robotics Competition at the state and national level this past
spring and summer. The state competition was held in Fairfax, VA.
Daniel and his friend, Jeremy Evans, won 1st place out of 13 robots at
that competition. The first of July, they flew to Denver, CO to participate
at the national Level. Out of over 40 robots, Daniel and Jeremy won 3rd
place. The robot they built consisted of a remote control car, which was
the base. Jeremy and Daniel then built the body and the arm out of
aluminum. The competition consisted of having to pick up envelopes,
CD's and a notebook and put them into mailbox slots. Along, with
being judged on the robot and how it performs, was a notebook, which
Daniel had CAD drawings and specs of the robot. They raised money
for their trip by selling beef jerky at school. Don't you wonder what
they might build this year?



Care Groups

We have the license to show "Fireproof" until January 2010. It is a good movie about relationships and family dynamics. If your group would be interested in seeing it check it out in Weaver's Church Library.



**Weaver's Mennonite
Church**

Called into God's Family, we join together . . . to carry out His mission in the world



Silent Sermon

A member of a certain church, who previously had been attending services regularly, stopped going.

After a few weeks, the preacher decided to visit him. It was a chilly evening. The preacher found the man at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire

Guessing the reason for his preacher's visit, the man welcomed him, led him to a comfortable chair near the fireplace and waited.

The preacher made himself at home but said nothing. In the grave silence, he contemplated the dance of the flames around the burning logs.

After some minutes, the preacher took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it

to one side of the hearth all alone then he sat back in his chair, still Silent.

The host watched all this in quiet contemplation. As the one lone ember's flame flickered and diminished, there was a momentary glow and then its fire was no more.

Soon it was cold and dead. Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting...

The preacher glanced at his watch and realized it was time to leave. He slowly stood up, picked up the cold, dead ember and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately it began to glow, once more with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it.

As the preacher reached the door to

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The Nutcracker will be presented at Cole Hall at Bridgewater Brethren College on December 4th & 5th at 7:30pm and December 6th at 3:00pm. Weaver's participants this year will be Amber Hertzler, Carrie and Eli Wright, and Makayla Eby. Jennifer Wright is the rehearsal supervisor. See the parents of any participants for tickets.

leave, his host said with a tear running down his cheek, 'Thank you so much for your visit and especially for the fiery sermon.'

I shall be back in church next Sunday.'

We live in a world today, which tries to say too much with too little.

Consequently, few listen.

Sometimes the best sermons are the ones left unspoken.

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Willard Swartley's Covenant of Peace

Learning about "The evangelism of peace"

Studying peace:

For the past year a group of us have been reading Willard Swartley's *Covenant of Peace: The missing piece in New Testament Theology and Ethics*. Swartley provides an OT background on shalom and offers a definition of peace and relates peace to related concepts like reconciliation, blessing, kingdom of God, salvation, the covenant and others. Then the author looks at New Testament books for their teaching on peace. He concludes with chapters on how the church learns and teaches peace with several key concepts. I am summarizing here some of the key learnings about peace which I have gained through this study and discussion with the group. Others in the group may come to better conclusions. I would highly recommend this book for your reading. I have read parts of a number of the books that were referred to in the text and would like to read more.

Defining peace:

Peace (according to my earlier understanding), included mainly inner tranquility based on a new relationship with God, plus being a conscientious objector. In another sense, I saw peace as the absence of war between nations or other groups. Peace (shalom) in the Hebrew Bible (OT) covers a wide range of positive values from sufficient food, good health, good relationships (especially with God), absence of violence and salvation. Peace and evil, not peace and war are spoken of as opposites, according to scripture. War is never presented as a means to accomplish good.

Peace teaching neglected

Swartley shows throughout his book and in the appendix how teaching on peace has been neglected in scholarly writings used in seminaries and Bible schools. Most of the recent writings on New Testament and books on ethics give little if any attention to peace. Indicative of this neglect is the attention to the phrase "God of Peace." While appearing many more times than "God of wrath (or anger)", God of love, hope, etc., there has been no scholarly writing on this phrase for the past century or more.

Key connections of peace

The Sermon on the Mount tells us that those who work for peace will be called "children of God." As Jesus entered Jerusalem, he sensed the mood of the city and its people and wept "If this day you only knew what makes for peace ..." (Luke. 19:41).

Teaching and learning peace:

For the use of the church in teaching children and adults the whole gospel, Swartley pulls out these key concepts and images. I need to study the passages related to these and reflect on their meaning.

- Jesus seventh Beatitude: "Blessed are the peacemakers"
- Paul's unique title for God as "God of peace"
- NT has many passages on imitation of Jesus and discipleship
- "Christ is our peace" who has formed Jew & Gentiles into one body
- The "Lamb's War" in Revelation

Gospel of Peace

Several years ago Landstown (Va) Mennonite Church withdrew from the Virginia Mennonite Conference. Their primary concern as they presented it was that the Mennonite Church peace position hindered evangelism. I wonder how the early church would have responded to the distance the Landstown people saw between evangelism and peace. In early church documents, church officials are directed to withhold communion from soldiers who have killed. They were not to take communion for three years. Acts presents the conversion of a retired centurion. The phrase used by Paul "Gospel of Peace" could be paraphrased "evangelism of peace." Was Landstown's focus on the evangelism (good news) of peace?

Questions for further study

- How do we account for the neglect of peace in the Christian Church and what can/should be done to adopt a more Biblical approach?
- How has the Mennonite Church presented the NT doctrine of peace (as "shalom")?
- In what sense is God nonviolent? (If God did not do violence to rescue his son from violent men, does that show how important nonviolence is to God?)
- If God 'does not do violence', how do we understand events like the conquest of Canaan, the exile of the Israelites and destruction of Jerusalem? Could we understand God as withholding his protecting hand to permit evil men to do violence (and thereby punish other evil persons)?
- Is it God's respect for human freedom in God's permitting violent people to do violence? To what extent is part of God's maintenance of the universe the restraint of violence?

- If Jesus' death was the result of political and religious leaders coveting Jesus popularity and seeing him as a threat to their protection of power and wealth, can we say it was because God wanted these evil men to kill Jesus?
- If God has led his people during Biblical times and today in way of peace, why would he expect them to have the burden of protecting a territorial state (Israel, United States, etc.) by violence from competitors, rather than being the instrument of blessing and evangelizing the world?

I would be glad to talk with you or read your email comments on this essay. Contact me at:

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David Alleman



Recent Additions from the Library

Videos- -

Legend of the Desert Bigfoot Last Chance Detectives

Mystery Lights of Navajo Mesa Last Chance Detectives

Son Canyon River Adventure

The Knight Travelers Adventures in Odyssey

A Fine Feathered Frenzy Adventures in Odyssey

Star Quest Adventures in Odyssey

Once Upon an Avalanche Adventures in Odyssey

Someone to Watch Over Me Adventures in Odyssey

'Twas the Fight Before Christmas McGee and Me

In the Nick of Time McGee and Me

The Blunder Years McGee and Me

Charlottes Web E.B. White

Jonah The Greatest Adventure

Can We Depend on You? Clayton Kratz

DVD's - -

The Star of December Veggie Tales

A Horse for Danny

The Foundling The Waltons

The Christmas Story Keepers

Audio Book --

In This Time, In This Place Mennonite Mission Network

Books- -

Veggie Tales—Hats Off to Lyle Ronald Kidd

Veggie Tales— Good Knight, Duke

Veggie Tales— Three Pirates and a Duck Doug Peterson

Violet Comes to Stay Melanie Cecka

Lady of Milkweed Manor Julie Klassen

Above the Line: Take One Karen Kingsbury

...Best Collection of Clean Jokes Bob Phillips

Michal Jill Eileen Smith

A Widow's Hope Mary Ellis

A Gift of Grace Amy Clipston

This Side of Heaven Karen Kingsbury

Hidden Shelly Shepard Gray

Plain Pursuit Beth Wiseman

William Henry is Fine Name Cathy Gohlke

The Tears of My Soul Sokreaksa S. Himm



FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE...

Say Hello To Our College Students!

This month I am suggesting we focus on our college students. Some of our students are attending colleges in the area, and others are very far away from home. I know they would appreciate a card or letter, or even an email, letting them know you are thinking of them and praying for their experience in college...and if you're so inclined, I know they would welcome a care package of sorts! I have provided the contact information for each college student from Weavers. Thank you for encouraging our college students, wherever they are.

In Christ's Love,
Joe

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