

The Post-War Years 1945 - 1960

As the summer of 1945 drew to a close, the families of the men and women, who had been off serving in the armed forces, eagerly awaited their victorious return home from the now-silent battlefields. The air-raid drills, blackouts, and government-imposed rationing had become things of the past. Good times lay ahead.

In cities and towns across the country, those who had been forced to step in and fill the void left by the departing servicemen were once again allowed to return to their homes, and often the comforts of their retirement. Their call to duty had also been fulfilled.

At churches everywhere (not just Ebenezer), these people returned to fill the positions on the choirs, in the Sunday Schools, and on the church councils and consistories, that they had left vacant at the start of the war. To these positions they came, many with a renewed desire to serve their Lord, the same Lord who had just delivered them from the foxholes and battlefields of war.

This dose of youth and vitality, coupled with the good feelings of the times, made for an era of unprecedented growth everywhere. Fortunately for us, Ebenezer, too, was a recipient of this growth. In a spirit of growth and change, reminiscent of that which had followed on the heels of World War I, the Joint Council-Consistory launched in on its first task, one that desperately needed to be taken care of-the church organ.

The history of the aforementioned Carnegie Organ, was a long one. Unfortunately for the church, it was a history that was not always filled with the most pleasant of musical notes. The Joint Council-Consistory minutes report that as early as August of 1910, barely six years after its installation, repairs had become necessary. These repairs, it is noted, were completed by January of 1912.

Then again, in July of 1928, a report was to be made concerning the cleaning and repair of the organ. Another breakdown of the organ, prior to the April 24th, 1936, meeting of the Joint Council-Consistory, led to another organ patch job. At that time, the organ repairman told the Joint Council-Consistory that "the action of the organ would within a few years have to be replaced by some new action." Additionally, he called their attention "to the fact that the organ blower motor needed repairs."

Another repairing came in the early part of 1943. This time the organ had been out of service since October of 1942. At that time it was reported that the organ had been "repaired as best it could be." The final breakdown of the organ came in October of 1945. At that time the idea was finally raised that maybe it was better to replace, rather than repair, the Carnegie Organ. An organ fund was then started, looking towards the day when a new organ could be purchased.

At a special meeting held at the New Tripoli National Bank on February 5, 1946, it was decided that a simple "for" or "against" vote be held in church on Sunday, February 24th, to decide whether or not to purchase a new organ. The result of the vote was ninety-nine votes for a new

organ and thirty-five against. The contract for the new organ was awarded to Paul Fritzsche of Allentown. The total cost of the organ would eventually be \$8,750.

The organ, as installed, is a large two-manual and pedal-electro-pneumatic action, consisting of twenty-two stops, nine couplers, and ten combination pistons, together with various mechanicals and all-electric chimes. The organ is equipped with two independent expression chambers, and such outstanding stops as the hecklephone, bassoon, vox humana, and a three-rank viol celeste.

Through some very generous gifts, a number of the organ's components were provided. The console was provided by the Ebenezer Ladies Aid Society at a cost of \$1,250. The chimes were provided by Mr. & Mrs. Charles E. Snyder at a cost of \$750. The vox humana stop was a gift of the Women's Missionary Guild at a cost of \$550. The console light was a gift of the Girl Scouts of Troop #79.

The dedication services for the new organ were held on Sunday, August 4th, 1946, with both an afternoon and an evening service. The afternoon service featured a number of different musical selections, each chosen to highlight a stop or a unique feature of the new organ, such as the "Shepherd's Idyll," which featured the vox celeste, harp, vox humana, and the bassoon stops. The organist for the service was Henry B. Hensinger, the organist at Salem Lutheran Church in Bethlehem. An address was delivered by Rev. Warren C. Heinly, the president of the Allentown Conference.

The service held in the evening consisted primarily of musical numbers. The Ebenezer Church Choir performed "The Lord's Prayer." Other selections included "In A Monastery Garden," the "Theme From 'Finlandia,'" and "Sweet Hour Of Prayer," selections that ranged up and down the musical scale. The organist duties at this service were performed by Mary M. Hand, organist at Grace Evangelical and Reformed Church in Easton.

One last note on the organ's specifications was the eventual addition of the harp stop. Although not included in the original contract, the harp stop was installed for the organ's dedication and was to be removed afterward. After hearing it in use, the Joint Council-Consistory, in a special meeting held in September of 1946, decided to make it a permanent part of the organ. This was done at an additional cost of \$1,000.

Fortunately for both congregations, this organ has held up remarkably well, sparing acts of nature, for going on forty-five years. We can only hope that it continues to sound forth joyously for church services in our building for the *next* forty-five years, with as little difficulty as we have had.

Another dedication, held in the church a little more than a year later, would sound a final note for the congregations, on the great global conflict that had engulfed the world during the first half of the decade. The bronze tablet, "in honor of the men of the church who served their country in World War II," was dedicated on Sunday, September 28, 1947. The plaque was unveiled by Darlene Ann Wertman and Sue Ann Wanamaker, daughters of two of the five men of our congregations to die during the war. The plaque hangs today in the narthex next to a similar plaque dedicated some twenty years earlier in memory of the soldiers of another great conflict.

As the choir left the church to the strains of "O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go," so was closed a long, sad, difficult chapter in our congregations' histories.

In addition to these dedications, two church anniversaries were celebrated in the latter half of the 1940s. May of 1945 saw Rev. Bachman celebrating the 20th anniversary of his pastorate of the Heidelberg Charge. A special service was held with addresses and musical selections. An even bigger celebration held three years later, in 1948, was the 50th anniversary of the Ladies Aid Society.

Held on Wednesday, March 31, 1948, this celebration topped off the glorious fifty-year history of this pioneering women's organization in our church. The guests of honor that day were the last four surviving charter members of the organization: Mrs. Granville Snyder, Mrs. Alvena Fister, Mrs. Clinton Leiby, and Mrs. Anna Loch. Each was presented with a potted plant.

The "Golden Jubilee," as The Morning Call referred to it, consisted of an all-day quilting attended by members of our church and neighboring churches. Covered-dish dinners provided both the lunch and suppertime meals.

The evening program was made up of short performances presented by Louise Schellhamer, Raymond Weiss, Yvonne Kistler, Mrs. Edward Laughlin, Mrs. William Reitz, Mrs. Raymond Mantz, and the Sunday-School Orchestra.

The main feature was a Pennsylvania-German play entitled "Ains Sawgt's Em Onnera" or "From One To Another." The main action took place in a setting very familiar to all of those women—a quilting party. Participating in the play were the following: Mrs. Marvin Kistler, Mrs. Ray Schellhamer, Mrs. Mary Smith, Mrs. Lewis Kunkel, Mrs. Earl Daniels, Mrs. Paul Leibensperger, Mrs. Ida Krause, Mrs. Raymond Mantz, Mrs. Arthur Snyder, Mrs. Lawrence Reitz, Mrs. Mabel Snyder, Mrs. Earl Scheirer, Mrs. Charles Weiss, Mrs. Ada Mantz, Mrs. Alvin German, Lawrence Reitz, Curtis Leibensperger, and David Reitz.

Unfortunately, the history of the Ladies Aid Society did not continue for too many more years. By the 1950s, the second generation of members had started passing away, and membership had begun to dwindle. A core of faithful members still hung on, but by 1970 the Ladies Aid Society was all but history. We owe a great debt of gratitude to these women, and it is a fitting tribute that we remember them, and their work, in this history.

Fortunately for the female members of our congregations today, these women started the ball rolling on women's involvement in church activity. At about the time the Ladies Aid Society was passing into history, a new group of younger women started to make its own history within the church.

The Women's Missionary Guild was organized on April 11, 1944. Its focus, in comparison to the Ladies Aid Society, was directed more to matters outside of the church, than on those within the building. The first president of this group was Mrs. Raymond (Lillian) Snyder. Three charter members who are still participating in church women's activities are Lucretia Laughlin, Helen Frey, and Irene Reitz.

From the beginning the missionary meetings included family involvement. The Brotherhood had monthly meetings at the same time, and several worship services and/or programs were shared. The children of the church provided entertainment through skits, plays, and songs.

A great many of the monthly programs were centered around a missionary theme. Money raised through projects, dues, and free-will offerings went for projects along this line. Minutes of the meetings mention gifts to different missionaries, boxes for Russian Relief, a check for Dr. Albert Schweitzer, servicemen remembered with gifts on holidays, support of an orphan through World Relief, and forty-nine tied quilts delivered directly by Carl and Lila Loch to Johnstown after the flood of 1977.

Fund raisers varied through the years. These included drawings for a surprise gift at each meeting, selling of candy, flavorings, soap, napkins, thread, books, and giving a minstrel show.

The biggest, and the one project that many participants still recall with fond memories today, was the dialect play, "Wos Ains Net Will Iss Es Onner Fro Dafor" (What One Doesn't Want The Other One Is Glad For), given in 1945. The cast of twenty-five gave twenty performances at various churches. Play proceeds were used to purchase the vox humana stop for the organ.

In the mid-60s, the name of the Women's Missionary Guild was changed to Women of the Church. The Synods were already using the name for their mailings and programs. Through the years since then, they have included ideas from both the Ladies Aid Society and the Missionary Guild.

Later fund raisers have included bake sales and, since 1982, the Holiday Bazaar in November. Money from the bazaar is shared equally among missionary projects and local church needs. Over the years the bazaar has brought in over \$14,000 for use at Ebenezer. Some of the items provided with these funds are: a refrigerator for the kitchen, microphones and stands for the Sunday School, youth choir gowns, a new well and pump, stainless tableware, and \$5,000 paid toward the new heating plant. Some of the women have continued quilting as a source of funds for special church needs. In the past years the quilters have given \$1,200 for music supplies, a microwave, a coffee pot, and funds for a new entrance.

Many of its sponsored activities date back to the beginning of the Missionary Guild. These include the Thank Offering, World Day of Prayer, Family Night in May, Lutheran Ingathering, monthly visitation of residents at Cedarbrook and Phoebe Homes, and the presentation of Sunshine Baskets to shut-ins at Christmas. Blanket Sunday may seem new to many, but it is just a new way of supplying blankets for World Relief. Before its cash offerings, the women made over three hundred and fifty tied quilts for World Relief.

Special meetings have always been shared with other church groups. In the beginning it was Lynnville and Jacob's; today it is Jacob's and New Bethel women who share programs with them. 1953 saw the start of an April Birthday Party for the residents of Cedarbrook. They still share this yearly event with Jacob's Church women, taking turns on providing entertainment and party favors.

Programs dropped over the years include the Ascension Day service and the building of a church library.

Some activities that have been started since this group became Women of the Church are the sponsoring of a group going to a yearly play, world and local service projects worked on during meetings, Food Bank, making the Thank Offering Service a family service instead of just for women, and the Advent Festival. The last few years the Advent Festival has been sponsored by other church groups. Sewing or Work Day is not a new idea, but a revived one.

At the same time that the Women of the Church were working so diligently, a group of Lutheran Church women were directing their efforts in another area. In early 1955 a survey had been taken of local doctors, in which they supported the building of another hospital. It was from these humble beginnings that the Muhlenberg Medical Center was born.

Ground-breaking took place July 19, 1959. A one-hundred and two-acre site on Schoenersville Road in northwest Bethlehem was chosen. The hospital had ninety-four rooms and beds for one hundred and eighty-seven patients. The actual cost of the hospital was \$1,800,000. Dedication took place April 22, 1961.

The hospital was to emphasize the provision of care for the chronically ill, a first for our Lehigh Valley area. The general hospital idea came later.

Once the hospital was a reality, the Lutheran Women of the Allentown Conference did not let anything stop them from forming an auxiliary. Key women gathered members, and the Muhlenberg Medical Center Auxiliary was born and chartered on April 15, 1957. These women raised \$40,000 in thirty months before they even had a building to work in. Participants included all the area Lutheran churches, particularly the Fogelsville-New Tripoli congregations.

The auxiliary had a special knack for raising funds. There were Plain-and-Fancy Fairs; a booth at the Allentown Fair; flea markets; bake sales, one of which was its own Little Red Booth with all home-baked cakes, breads, and pies for the Annual Summer Festival held on the hospital grounds in August. Each of the nine district churches had its own contribution for the Summer Festival. Fogelsville-New Tripoli area supplied and manned the home-baked goods stand.

Today, the nine area churches have diminished to four participating churches; however, their source of income is still fantastic. They run a gift shop and a cafe in the hospital building, and a thrift shop in South Bethlehem. From this income they have already paid \$40,000 of a \$180,000 commitment for diagnostic equipment to the hospital.

Our women from the Fogelsville-New Tripoli area, which includes Jordan Lutheran, St. Paul's, Seiberlingsville, Weisenberg, and Ebenezer churches, continue to serve the thrift shop about one day every six weeks.

Much of the history of this group is due in part to Irene Rau, the Fogelsville-New Tripoli chairperson for many, many years. Under her efforts and leadership a very loving share of volunteerism was given by all, and as they got older and infirmities took over, most of these

ladies (in spite of them) continued to give their energies and bounty. Sadly, no new, young recruits have offered to serve.

Summer storms must have an affinity for Ebenezer Church. Thirty-seven years after the storm that destroyed the church barn, another such storm came rumbling through the area on Sunday, May 25, 1947. The damage was severe enough to cause slates to be removed from the roof and, even more sadly, the storm damaged the weather vane that had been perched atop the steeple since the church was built in 1890. Unfortunately for us today, it was deemed to be unsafe and, sadly, it was removed.

The weather vane was giant in proportions. Its length has been estimated at five to six feet. One church member has related how, as a child, he would sit near his home in the vicinity of the present New Tripoli National Bank (which was then a field) and would watch the weather vane slicing through the air as the wind caught hold of it. He even states that at that distance he could hear it spinning round and round in the breeze.²⁷

Its whereabouts today remains a mystery to the many who would like to someday see it placed back on the steeple. Few clues exist to follow. The Joint Council-Consistory minutes for June 10, 1947, report on the storm damage and removal of the weather vane. An interesting note is made, as follows: "Since an offer by a man from Reading was made to buy the weather vane for placing in a museum, it was agreed to let the trustees handle the matter in an acceptable manner." The only other story that we have heard is that the weather vane is now on exhibit in a museum in Philadelphia. This we have not been able to verify.²⁸

The removal of the weather vane was not the only change to the church property during these years. In March of 1951 the question of the church barn came up once again. After the fire that destroyed the previous barn, a vote was taken whether or not to rebuild the barn. At that time already, it was felt that the farm was a losing proposition. The vote was in favor of rebuilding so, in its place, another barn was erected.

By 1950 the farm barely even existed, and the barn only represented one more property that needed to be maintained. It was once again decided to take a vote on the barn's future. This time the vote was that the barn had no future. It was decided to sell the barn versus razing it, and sealed bids were accepted. By summer of 1951, the church farm no longer existed as such. The barn was sold to Ralph Kressley for \$800, who proceeded to remove it.

The 1950s saw a period of great generosity to the church by Mr. & Mrs. Arthur D. Snyder and Mr. & Mrs. Carl D. Snyder. It was in January of 1952 that an announcement was made that a gift by the Arthur Snyders was to be made to the church. That gift was to be a state-of-the-art amplification system and carillonic bells.

The amplification system, which was installed throughout the church, was put in by the George D. Barbey Company of Reading. A tape recorder was installed as part of the package, which allowed for taping of church services for shut-ins. The system was considered, at that time, to be one of the best that was ever installed by the Barbey Company.

At the same time, and in conjunction with the installation of the aforementioned system, a set of carillon bells was also installed. Consisting of twenty-five English-type melody bells, which are turned bell metals that are struck by hammers, the carillon bells were built and installed by the prestigious Shulmerich Carillon Company of Sellersville.

The system was such that the bells could be played through the tower, inside by the organ, or both ways simultaneously. A roll player and program control clock were also attached and set to play a selection of hymns each evening at 6:00 p.m.

A dedication ceremony was held Sunday, September 21, 1952, at which time the system was dedicated to the glory of God and in memory of Mr. & Mrs. Nathan H. Snyder by Mr. & Mrs. Arthur D. Snyder. At that time, a total of \$10,000 had been donated by the Snyders, most of which went toward these two Systems.

The generosity of Mr. & Mrs. Snyder did not stop there. Over the next eight years, they would donate another \$12,500 to put towards various church funds. In addition, following the parents example, Mr. & Mrs. Carl D. Snyder also donated \$5,000 to these church funds. The pattern of generosity that was set in those years has continued through to the present. A recent gift from Mr. & Mrs. Carl D. Snyder has resulted in the beautiful enhancements to the carillon bell system and the hourly chime system that was also added.

With regard to this time period (1945 - 1960), ministerially it was a period of great change. The first to feel the effects of this were the Lutherans. By 1948, Rev. Bond had gone from being a young, single man, fresh from the seminary, to a well-rounded, mature, married minister who was fast approaching forty. All the while he had been at Ebenezer he had been pursuing graduate studies at the Philadelphia Seminary. With these studies completed, he was awarded the Bachelor of Divinity degree and, subsequently, a Master of Sacred Theology in 1947.

When a call came to Rev. Bond in the early half of 1948, a decision had to be made. That decision was to leave Ebenezer. The call that came was from St. Peter's Church in Hilltown, and so it was that on August 1, 1948, Rev. Bond and his now pregnant wife, the former Mary A. Hem, left for Hilltown, where he continued to preach for many years. A daughter, Nita A. Bond, was born to Rev. & Mrs. Bond shortly after their arrival in Hilltown.

Instead of this time opting for a seminary student, the Lutheran congregation decided to go for someone with a bit more experience under his belt. This time its call went out to the Rev. Luther J. Linn, a native of Tremont. Upon graduation from Tremont High School in 1931, Rev. Linn entered into Dickinson College in Carlisle, graduating with the class of 1935.

In 1940 he was graduated from Mt. Airy Lutheran Seminary in Philadelphia and, thusly, was ordained. His first parish was that of the Freeburg Parish in Freeburg, which he served from 1940 to 1944. From 1944 to 1949, he served the Washingtonville Parish in Washingtonville. It was from this parish that the call to Ebenezer came.

Rev. Linn spent eight years at Ebenezer, from 1949 until 1957. These eight years from all accounts appear to have been eight rather uneventful years for the Lutheran congregation. His

resignation though, the Lutheran Council records indicate, came after a brief illness which, in turn, had kept him from preaching. After his departure from the Lutheran congregation at Ebenezer, Rev. Linn went on to fill a pastorate at Zion Lutheran in Old Zionsville.

Probably the shortest of all pastorates at Ebenezer was that of Rev. Linn's successor. The Rev. George L. Ziegenfuss was called to Ebenezer in 1957. Virtually no biographical material has been available on Rev. Ziegenfuss, other than that he resigned his position at Ebenezer two years later, in 1959.

The Reformed congregation had a-bit-rougher period ministerially during the latter half of the 1950s. By the year 1956, Rev. Bachman had turned seventy years old and had completed thirty years of service to the charge. It was only natural that the thought of retirement should enter the picture.

Many members felt that the death of Rev. Bachman's son, William, in World War II had been a turning point in his career. Naturally to lose a child is difficult, but to lose a child in an act of war, when for so many years as a man of the cloth you preach of love, peace and forgiveness, must have been especially difficult. It was felt that, from that point on, Rev. Bachman was never quite the same.

So it was on June 10, 1956, in a letter to the congregation, Rev. Bachman said his goodbyes and announced his retirement, along with his career statistics. The letter said:

"Schnecksville, Pa.

June 10, 1956

"Dear Friends:

"This is not an easy letter to write but it will permit me to address you directly and intimately, and without the emotional strain which too often accompanies a verbal statement from the pulpit.

"I wish to be relieved from the major portion of the work in the service of the Heidelberg Charge. I presented my resignation to the Joint Consistory and it was accepted. The Lehigh Synod has severed the relationship as of June 30th, 1956. A Pulpit Committee has been appointed and the pulpit should be filled within a reasonable time.

"This has not been a sudden decision. I am past the retirement age. Some of the work has become burdensome. My wife and I would like to spend our remaining years more quietly and free from the thought that so much is left undone or improperly attended to.

"I want to close my ministry here with Holy Communion Services. Through these services we come into the closest possible relationship with each other and with our Lord, Jesus Christ.

"We are truly grateful for the support which you have given your church and us. It is a pleasure to work with people who support the whole program of the denomination. The past years have brought many changes in the membership of our congregations, in the program of the denomination, and to our church property. Our churches, however, can not stop making progress. Many former members have been called to the heavenly home but we have received many new members who are willing to carry the torch. This field holds forth great promise for fruitful service in the vineyard of our Lord. May God abundantly bless you at all times.

"The many hours we spent together in the Lord's House have always been a source of great joy and strength to me. Your presence, help, and sympathy in the hours of illness and sorrow can never be forgotten and your kindness and encouragement has greatly endeared you to us. May we mutually continue to enjoy this fine relationship until the end of life.

"Very sincerely yours,

/S/ T. H. Bachman

"Report to June 11, 1956

Bethel, Gt. Swamp,

Chestnut Hill,

Grace Charges and

	Ebenezer	Heidelberg	outside churches	Total
Baptisms	428	627	515	1570
Confirmed	370	330	500	1200
Funerals	275	341	492	1108
Marriages	187	233	145	565
New Members	274	278	179	731
Addresses				560
Pastoral Calls				34,043
Miles on automobiles				409,849
Private Communion				1,660
Sermons				4,364"

As his letter stated, his retirement was to become effective on July 1, 1956. In November of 1956, he was named Pastor Emeritus. Rev. Bachman would return to Ebenezer again, in 1958, upon the death of his successor, Rev. Robert Haas, until a replacement could be found.

Rev. Bachman's final years at Ebenezer had seen much activity and change. The post-war years saw growth almost everywhere, churches not excluded. With the retirement of Rev. Bachman imminent, it was decided by the Synod that a restructuring of the charge was necessary.

A number of years earlier, a third church had been added to the Heidelberg Charge. That church, Dinkey Memorial, was located across the Blue Mountains in Ashfield. Rev. Bachman was one of the last of the old-style ministers who, much like the Helffrichs before him, preached in a number of different churches. With congregations growing, and more time being required of ministers to minister to these churches, the Synod saw the need for a smaller charge. So, in June of 1956, the old three-church charge was dissolved. In its place was formed the Heidelberg Charge, consisting of Heidelberg and Ebenezer Churches. Rev. Bachman, it was agreed, would remain on as the supply pastor for Dinkey Memorial.

The biggest project of Rev. Bachman's final years at Ebenezer was something that, true to form for Ebenezer, had long been talked about but was never acted upon. That was the building of a Reformed parsonage.

Actually, in what to that time had been a two-hundred-fifteen-year history, the charge never had owned or maintained a parsonage. The ministers were required to provide their own residences. Rev. Bachman, during all his years at Ebenezer, had always lived at his own home on Fourth Street in the town of Slatington.

Many people, like Rev. Bachman, at that time were able to see what was on the horizon. The day when ministers provided their own homes had become a thing of the past. It would take more than a good church to lure new ministers to these positions, in the days when benefits of all types were being provided to other workers.

Talk of a parsonage for the church had been circulating for a number of years. As early as 1949, a meeting of the Ebenezer and Heidelberg Consistories had been held at Pleasant Corners, to discuss the topic of buying a parsonage.

At that time it was felt that the cost should be split fifty-fifty. A place must have been located, as the records indicate that our share would have been \$2,250. Whatever became of this deal is not clear, because by the mid-1950s talk had once again turned to the subject of a church parsonage.

This time the talk was not of buying, but of building. It was with a great spirit of cooperation between the two congregations of the charge that this project was launched; the result, a beautiful new \$26,000 parsonage was erected.

The site that was chosen for the parsonage was on a lot facing the new Northwestern Lehigh Junior Senior High School, located about halfway between the two churches. Much of the work on the structure was done by volunteers from both congregations, and many of the materials used

were donated also. A final count of the time that was donated towards the construction, computed at 90 cents per hour, was:

Heidelberg	\$ 940.92
Ebenezer	<u>\$1,387.43</u>
Total	\$2,328.35

A dedication service was held on May 20th, 1956, at which time Rev. Bachman referred to the building of this structure as the beginning of "a new era in the charge," and noted that the pulpit committee was seeking a tenant for the home in his successor, and that this person would probably be named in about three months.

It is interesting to note that, at the same time that the Reformed congregation was building its parsonage, the Lutheran congregation also was looking into the idea. In November of 1956, it was suggested to the Lutheran Council that it purchase the former home of Rev. A. O. Ebert as a charge parsonage. The other churches in the charge would then pay rent to the New Tripoli congregation as their share of the expenses.

It seems that the rent that was to be charged did not set well with two of the churches, and the deal fell through. The issue was once more raised in June of 1958 when an accord was reached with the other churches of the charge, at which time a final rental amount was agreed upon.

A committee consisting of John Brunner, Clarence Frey, Wayne Moyer, and Leroy Krause, was instructed to inspect a number of properties about New Tripoli that were then available. The committee chose the home of Queen Kerschner on Decatur Street to be the new parsonage. By a vote of one hundred nine for and ten against, the property was purchased at a price of \$15,000. This home remained the Lutheran parsonage until the final dissolution of the Lutheran congregation at Ebenezer.

The "new era" that Rev. Bachman saw looming on the horizon, and spoke of in his speech at the parsonage dedication, was the creation of the United Church of Christ, as we know it. Just about the time that Rev. Bachman was making his decision to retire, this new church was being formed by the merging of the Evangelical and Reformed Churches, of which we were one, with the Congregationalist Churches, a denomination that flourished throughout New England.

With all these happenings taking place in the late 1950s. . . the building and maintaining of a home for the minister, the retirement of Rev. Bachman and, finally, the formation of the United Church of Christ . . . in retrospect, we really can look back and see the end of an era for the Reformed congregation at Ebenezer. Just as Revs. Smith, Althouse, and Bachman had represented a fresh new era over the very old-order Helffrich family so, too, would Rev. Bachman's successor, and those to come later, represent another new era within today's church.

One last celebration to make note of during this period took place in September of 1955, and harked back upon a much earlier period. On that Sunday, Rev. Bachman and the Reformed con-

gregation celebrated the 100th anniversary of the ordination of Rev. William A. Helffrich at Ebenezer. Rev. Bachman read a sermon of Rev. Helffrich's in German which, it is noted in the Reformed record books, "was enjoyed by all who could understand it." Later that afternoon, a plaque was dedicated that included the names of all the Reformed ministers who had served the congregation. This plaque hangs today in the church narthex.

Finding a replacement for Rev. Bachman went rather quickly. Called to take Rev. Bachman's place was a young minister by the name of Rev. Robert A. Haas. Rev. Haas was born in Northampton on May 15, 1927, a son of William F. and Margaret L. (Wormick) Haas. He and his family were members of St. John's Church (Miller's Church) in Laurys.

Rev. Haas graduated from South Whitehall (now Parkland) High School in 1945. Upon graduation, he enrolled at Franklin and Marshall College, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1948. His choice of the ministry as a career led him to enter the Theological Seminary at Lancaster, from which he graduated in 1951.

He was ordained on June 10, 1951, and shortly thereafter left to fill his first pastorate, which was the three-church Old Goshenhoppen Charge in Montgomery County. When Friedens Church in Sumneytown split from the charge, he accepted its call to be the church's first fulltime pastor. It was from this church that he came to Ebenezer in December of 1956.

At the time of his arrival at Ebenezer, Rev. Haas and his wife, the former Marian M. Griffith, were the parents of three children: Susan, Judith, and David.

Sadly, Rev. Haas's tenure at Ebenezer was not to be a long one. His sudden death in the early morning hours of September 8, 1958, came as a shock to both of his congregations. The cause of his death was attributed to heart failure, accompanied by a number of other medical problems.

Funeral services were held at Ebenezer. The consistories of both of his congregations held a wake the night before the services. After the services, his body was taken back to rest with those of his family who had gone on before. He was buried in the cemetery of his home church-Miller's in Laurys.

Rev. Haas had not had it easy. As a child he had had to have a leg amputated. Naturally, one struggles with such a disability, but he did not let it get the best of him. He went on to do the things that he wanted to do. Upon his arrival at Ebenezer, he and his family were happily welcomed to the church, and acceptance came quickly. The Ladies Aid Society generously provided funds for the purchase of a new prosthesis for his use. His death so early in life was deeply felt by all the members of the church, and the void that was left by it was not easy to fill. The snatching from life of such a good person, so early, just serves to further exemplify the age-old saying that "God works in mysterious ways."