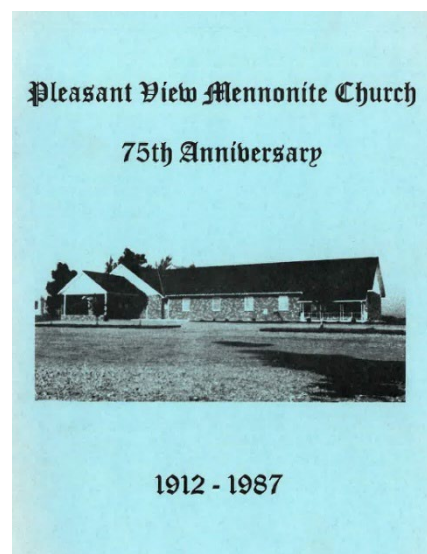


From the Archives

Pleasant View Mennonite Church marked its 75th anniversary in 1987 with a weekend of meetings and a congregational history. The history was put together by a committee of four (Mary Hostetler, Fannie Miller, Susie Keim, Wilma Mullet) and includes 82 pages of photos and memories along with the main narrative.

The committee acknowledges that they included some memories “which do not necessarily have any bearing on our church history” but which “the young generation now (and to come) can scarcely imagine.” For me, such memories include the idiosyncrasies of the Model T, which was the only automobile permitted by church rules in 1925. Reportedly, if one was not wounded by the dangerous hand crank at startup, speeds of 15 mph could be achieved—if road conditions permitted. Even so, steep inclines or low gasoline levels might require navigating in reverse, since transmissions tended to slip more in forward settings and gasoline flowed better when the tank was tilted toward the front!



Nervous cows that bolted through gaps in barn walls, adaptations for Depression-era conditions, and the transitions between German and English are also discussed in the history. And what fun to remember that the backless Amish-style church benches were sometimes crammed in so tightly that a visiting evangelist accidentally knocked the glasses off Pastor John Swartzentruber’s face!

Because one man suggested a picture be taken of the small (20 x 30 feet) dwelling house that was adapted for use by the congregation, we can see how dramatically the meeting houses have improved over the years. The old house is long gone, though the present structure is situated on the same plot of land originally donated by John Swartzentruber.

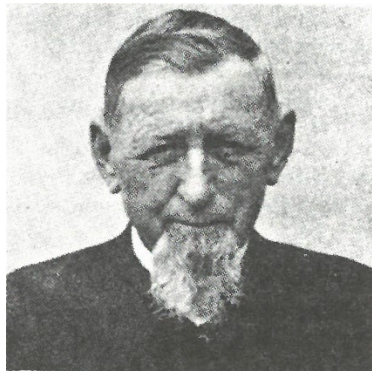
One feature of the history of Pleasant View that is easily forgotten is the role it played in the founding of other congregations. Not all outreaches were equally successful, and not all helped to create churches that remain in the Rosedale Network, but as the history makes abundantly clear, Pleasant View should be considered a “mother church.” Not only did its members welcome the winter influx of students for the early days of what is now Rosedale Bible College, but they and their leaders played a significant role in the founding of ten other worship locations. (See graphic on the next page.)

Times have changed, but this congregational history includes among its pictures a snapshot of the future of the congregation in 1983. Perhaps some readers will recognize themselves or others from the photo.



Our youth group, 1983.

In the 1930s, when the congregation suffered a painful split, the history remembers that a visiting minister was a calming influence who “did much to promote peace.” Apparently, he is the one who taught the 21 remaining members a song entitled “The Riches of Love” [in Christ Jesus]. I can’t decide how well the image below captures the soft heart he apparently had, but I love to honor



Mike Zehr

the memory of men like Mike Zehr, and I applaud the effort that Pleasant View made to remember him and so many others who loved and served God in their midst.

OUTREACHES

