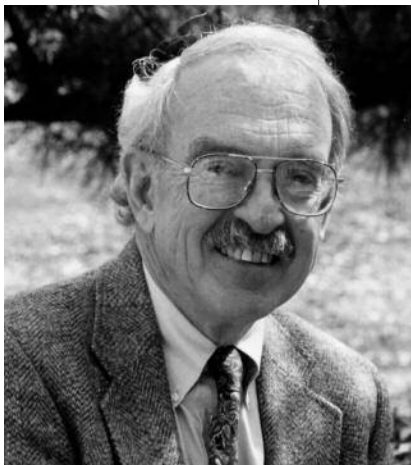


of the
Brethren in Christ
Historical Society

Ronald J. Sider to Give the 2011 Schrag Lectures



Each year the Sider Institute sponsors the Schrag Lectures. This year's lecturer is the well-known author and speaker Ronald J. Sider. Sider's first lecture is on Friday evening, March 21. The lecture will begin at 7:00 p.m. in the Parmer Cinema, Boyer Hall, on the campus of Messiah College. The title of his lecture is "Reassessing the Early Church's Position on War, Abortion, and Capital Punishment."

On the morning of March 22 at 9:45 in Brubaker Auditorium he will speak on "Exploring the Limits of Nonviolence in the 21st Century." Both lectures are open to the public without charge.

The Schrag Lectures are in honor of former Messiah College faculty members Martin and Dorothy Schrag. The lectures come under the umbrella of the Sider Institute, whose director is Richard Hughes.

The Sider Institute began as an organization of the Brethren in Christ Historical Society under the name Center for Brethren in Christ Studies. Although the Institute is operated by Messiah College, the Brethren in Christ Historical Society has an active part in directing aspects of the Institute's program. **BICHS**

Annual Dinner Meeting of the Sider Institute

The annual dinner of the Sider Institute will precede the Schrag Lecture on March 21. The dinner begins at 5:45 p.m. in Howe Atrium, Boyer Hall. The cost for the meal is \$18.50 per person.

Reservations for the dinner should be sent to Carol Hostetter, Messiah College, One College Avenue, Box 3008, Grantham, PA 17027. Mrs. Hostetter may also be contacted by telephone (717-766-2511). Reservations need to be made by March 14.

Attendants at the dinner are invited to hear the lecture in Parmer Cinema by Ronald J. Sider immediately following the dinner. The lecture is without charge.

Appointment to Historical Society Position

Devin Manzullo-Thomas has been appointed Assistant Editor of the Brethren in Christ Historical Society's journal, *Brethren in Christ History and Life*. Earlier, in 2010, he began a three-year term as a member of the journal's Editorial Board.

His chief duty as Assistant Editor is to solicit and edit articles by Brethren in Christ artists, poets, and musicians. The journal has been encouraging and publishing such articles for several years. The new position of Assistant Editor will increase the attention given to discovering Brethren in Christ people who work in these arts.

Manzullo-Thomas graduated from Messiah College in 2009, with a B. A. in English and a



minor in religious studies. The next year he married Kate Manzullo, also a graduate of Messiah College. From May 2009 to August 2010, he served as an associate in congregational relations with the Brethren in Christ Church.

He grew up at the Carlisle Brethren in Christ Church. In college he began to attend the Harrisburg Brethren in Christ Church. With his wife

Kate, he attends the Circle of Hope Brethren in Christ Church in Philadelphia.

Manzullo-Thomas is studying for an M.A. in Public History at Temple University in Philadelphia. He regularly blogs on Brethren in Christ history at devinthomas.wordpress.com. **BICHS**

E. Morris Sider
Editor

Glen A. Pierce
Contributing Editor

The Newsletter of the Brethren in Christ Historical Society is published three times a year. No subscription charge. Comments, ideas, article suggestions, and letters may be directed to the Editor, Brethren in Christ Historical Society, P.O. Box 310, Grantham, PA 17027, (717) 766-7767.

E-Mail: msider@messiah.edu
Web: www.bicweb.org/ministries/histsoc

Why I Am a Member of the Brethren in Christ Historical Society

By Nelson Byers

It has been said that we are by nature curious about our past and the events in the past that made us what we are. The inspiration that we get from the knowledge of the past is of great importance as we consider the future.



All of my adult life I have been fascinated by all kinds of history. In our travels my wife sometimes tires of my having to stop to read historical markers along the way. I want to know what took place, why it took place, and who were the important people involved.

Over the years one of the great joys of my life has been learning to know a great many Brethren in Christ pastors, evangelists, missionaries, bishops and other church leaders as a result of life-long Brethren in Christ membership and my father, Charlie Byers, who was a bishop for thirty-nine years of my life. This afforded me many insights into the workings of the church. I became acquainted with most of the evangelists in the denomination because of my attendance at many, many revival meetings, not only the two- and three-week meetings at my home church, but by going with my father to revival

meetings in the other district churches of which he was bishop. Then there were the General Conferences where I became acquainted with church leaders somewhat as a result of much discussion and debate on Conference floor, especially in earlier years when there was less work done by committees and more done on the Conference floor. And I became acquainted with the many Brethren in Christ ministers who spoke here at Roxbury during its seventy-five years.

All of this gave me a window into much of the individual and collective thinking, understanding, and theology of the church as I know it. I have, as most of you, witnessed the very significant changes that have taken place in our denomination during the last sixty years. While I am aware of some of the circumstances and thinking of church leadership during the years, I am also aware that there is much more continually being discovered and recorded. Most of us remember the closing line of Paul Harvey's commentary: "And now you know the rest of the story." This is what I want to know about the people, places and circumstances that made the Brethren in Christ what we are. What is the rest of our story? What were the influences that formed the thinking of past church leaders?

Not only am I curious about the outworking of our past, I am also interested in the current direction of our church, as well any clues as to how it will look in the future. What is the thinking of today's church and lay leaders? Biographical stories, sermons, and articles published by the Historical Society will provide much insight and answers to these questions.

The two purposes of the Historical Society as noted in its constitution very well sum up my reasons for membership: To encourage the study and research of Brethren in Christ life and thought, and to provide a medium for the exchange of ideas on the historical, theological and contemporary life of the Brethren in Christ.

For many years I promoted a lot of books from this platform. At the rock bottom price of \$10.00 a year for membership in the Brethren in Christ Historical Society, this is easily the best deal yet. I don't see how they do so much for so little.



Nelson Byers, a long-time member of the Historical Society, was for many years the manager of the Christian Light Bookstore in Chambersburg, Pa. By invitation he presented this article at the 2010 annual meeting of the Historical Society, held in late July at Roxbury Holiness Camp.

Reserve the Date

The Annual Heritage Service

is scheduled for

Sunday, June 5,

at the historic

Ringgold

MEETINGHOUSE

More information about the service will be posted on the Historical Society's web site: bicweb.org/ministries/histsoc. Or send an email to: Archives@messiah.edu.

newsandnotes

FROM THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST HISTORICAL LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

The *Evangelical Visitor*, which chronicled the life of the Brethren in Christ from its first issue in 1887 to its last issue in 2004, is a valuable resource for understanding the Brethren in Christ. Bound issues of the *Visitor* are available for research in the Brethren in Christ Historical Library and Archives, located on the lower level of the Messiah College library. (For more information, email Archives@messiah.edu or telephone (717) 691-6048 between 9:00-3:00, Monday through Thursday.)

In 1904, St. Louis was the site of a world's fair that commemorated the 100th anniversary of the Louisiana Purchase. Benjamin Gish of Abilene, Kansas (over 70 years old at the time), felt the Brethren in Christ should launch a mission in St. Louis. Several articles in the *Visitor* from July 1904 through July 1905 (excerpted below) chronicle his efforts in persuading the larger church to respond to the idea.

■ **July 1, 1904 (p. 2):**

After attending General Conference and three love feasts in Ontario, and spending one day each, at the Buffalo, N.Y. Mission and at St. Louis, Mo., I came home on the 10th, and attended the love feast at Belle Springs on the 11th and 12th. There I requested privilege to select a committee of three brethren to go to St. Louis, Mo., and look up the field and consider whether it would be advisable to establish a Mission there. The request was granted.

■ **September 1, 1904 (p. 14):**

In place of starting on the 4th of July accompanied by others, I started on the 4th of August myself alone.... When the Spirit led me to this work I promised to do what I can, and in my surrender and consecration I promised the Lord to follow whithersoever he goeth.... And now I am waiting on the Lord and the consecration of his people as I cannot do the work myself; never had an idea of that kind. The members of the body are all joined together and are of his flesh and bone. That is, if we are not amputated or paralyzed....

I have been looking for a suitable place and tent, and now have the offer of a tent, 60 feet in diameter with seats for about 200 people, for \$105, including lot rent for three months.

■ **September 15, 1904 (p. 13):**

I do not wish to be lengthy, nor state the many trials met with. I am glad that the Lord has given me wonderful perseverance for which he shall have all the glory. I have bought a tent to live in, with gasoline stove and other articles necessary for tent life. I have now slept in it two nights and was happy, and this morning as I left my tent I felt to sing, "O! happy day that fixed my choice," etc. Have also contracted for a tent 60 feet in diameter to be put up as soon as help comes, having repeatedly stated in my much writing that the work is too much for one man....

You members who never have been away from the church circle cannot comprehend it. As above stated, if left alone here I will be classed among the swarmers or fanatics [presumably persons who are also at the World's Fair], and the great work which might have been done will be a failure, and the powers of darkness rejoice over it. Therefore, for the sake of Christ, the church, and humanity, heed the Macedonian cry, "Come over and help us."

■ **November 1, 1904 (pp. 12-13):**

We get in straits here. The past week our gospel tent was torn in pieces with the storm, and the little tent in which we live had a narrow escape in the

storm of two days.... Lately my wife also came here to assist in the work and she hit a rough time. If we live till November 2, 1904, we have lived together fifty years....

■ **December 1, 1904 (pp. 6-7), writing from Abilene:** ...much good could have been done if we had been properly organized and equipped.... But as it was, and is now in the past, we regret the insignificance of our labor as it now appears to us.... As previously stated our gospel tent was rent in twain, and we could find no suitable place for further work under existing unsettled conditions, election time, pulling down, etc., and no authority. So we decided that brother and sister Long [who joined Gish in September] go to... Tennessee, for a time as there seemed to be an opening there.... Myself and wife have come home and met all in usual health.

■ **July 1, 1905 (p. 6), in an article entitled "As to Lost Opportunities":** Jude i.6, "What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise and call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us that we perish not."... [This] warning is written for every sleeper at the present time, and especially to those that have a special calling and duty from God and the church, including moderators, Home and Foreign Mission Boards, elders, ministers, deacons, and all lay members that are *not awake to righteousness* or judgment, justice and equity. There was a time when the Lord God ... said, his watchmen are blind, they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber....

...When I read the editorials of the *Visitor*...I was stirred, as often before, to the innermost soul, heart or nerve center.... I was vividly reminded of my own experience in the past year... [seeing] the glory of Israel waning or departing and the many precious opportunities for doing good pass by unimproved. Lost, lost, forever lost! **BIC IS**

Renewal Reminder

Please check the mailing label on this *Newsletter*. If it has "11" on the upper-right corner, that means your membership has been paid through calendar year 2011. If your label reads "10," our records indicate that your membership expired at the end of 2010. In order to continue receiving the Journal and this Newsletter, please send your renewal check as soon as possible. The cost of an annual membership is \$10.00; contributions above that amount receive a tax-deductible receipt.

In the U.S., make checks payable to "Brethren in Christ Historical Society" and mail to: Brethren in Christ Historical Society; Messiah College P.O. Box 3002; Grantham, PA 17027.

In Canada, make cheques payable to "Canadian Conference BIC Church," and on the memo line, write "Historical Society." Mail to: Leonard Chester; 209-400 Steele St.; Port Colborne, ON L3K 5Z7.

THE Newsletter

*of the
Brethren in Christ
Historical Society*

Brethren in Christ Church

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Images from the Past

From the photograph collection of the Brethren in Christ Historical Library & Archives

“In 1937 General Conference recognized the responsibility of the Sunday school ‘to reach the unreached in its community’ and charged it to ‘make definite and regular efforts to this end.’ Concern for community outreach became especially pronounced during the 1940s. The first article in *Forward*, a promotional periodical launched by the General Sunday School Board in 1948, was entitled ‘Evangelism in the Sunday School.’” (*Quest for Piety and Obedience*, p. 418)



This undated photo, thought to be taken in 1956, shows three buses used by the Beulah Chapel Sunday School in Springfield, Ohio. Beulah Chapel (now Westside Christian Community Church) celebrates its centennial this year. The drivers (from left to right) are Archie Waldron, Floyd Grady, and James Payne.