

History of
Maytown Reformed Church
1918-1976

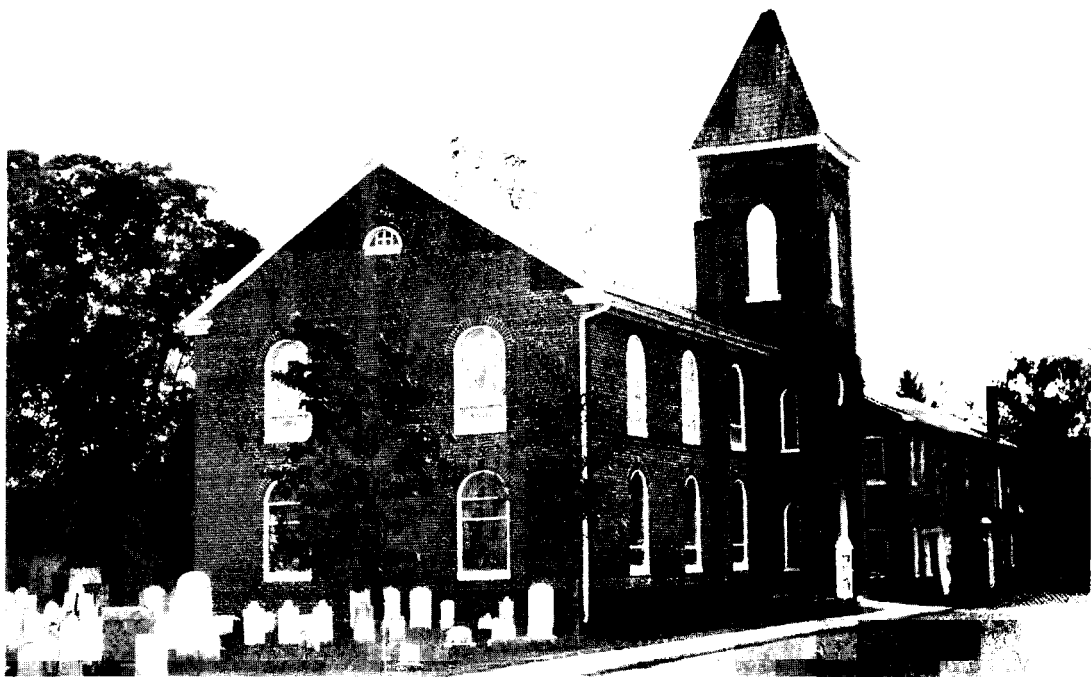
By Henry Longenecker Haines,
Anna Kready Haines and
The Reverend Paul N. Marsteller

Preface

Having come to love and admire the people of Maytown Reformed Church and realizing that the history of the congregation has not been recorded since 1918, I felt this Bicentennial Year a most appropriate one in which to undertake this endeavor. In the nearly sixty years since the appearance of Mr. Lowe's history, much has taken place in the life of this congregation: there have been times of stress, upheaval, and discouragement; but there have also been accomplishments which have made it possible for this small congregation to continue as a part of The Church and to continue its service to the community of Maytown.

A church is mainly people, and it is mainly about the people of Maytown Reformed Church we write . . . men and women who, in many cases, have been members of this church literally a life-time or from the time of marriage; and men and women who, when necessity makes their departure from Maytown necessary, ever hold their home church in special affection.

In the writing of a history, one of course relies heavily on all available written documents, records, letters, minutes, etc. But along with this, I felt that two people would be ideal source-people: Henry L. Haines, a life-long member of Maytown Reformed Church; and his wife, Anna Kready Haines, a member from the time of her marriage to Mr. Haines in 1921. Their great concern for the life and future of this church—along with their



clear memories of both people and events—has made it possible to write a history that is more than a mere compilation of facts and dates from aged volumes. It is thus that they are listed as co-authors: for without them many facts would not be accurate, many impressions would be incorrect, and many personal observations would be absent.

Our history, therefore, takes up as our nation ended "the war to end all wars" and brings us to the celebration of our nation's two-hundredth birthday—a period observed keenly and intelligently by these two remarkable people and herewith recorded for the encouragement of both present and future members of Maytown Reformed Church and all others concerned with the life of this small but vigorous congregation.

Rev. Paul N. Marsteller

No major crisis or event brought to a close the history of our church as written by the late Reverend William J. Lowe and read to the Lancaster County Historical Society at their meeting on March 1, 1918, and subsequently published in Volume XXII Number 3 in its *Journal*. His history simply concluded with his administration, and two months after its publication his resignation was effective and had been accepted in order that he might accept the call to serve our church in McConnellsburg, Pennsylvania.

From May to September, 1918, the Reverend Alvin F. Dietz served as supply minister; and on February 9, 1919, at a congregational meeting following the morning worship service, it was voted to extend a call to

Charles M. Mitzell, a student in the Middle Class of Lancaster Theological Seminary. He was to receive a salary of \$650.00 per year plus use of the parsonage and payment of his moving expenses from Dallastown, Pennsylvania; but, he was to "furnish ministers required for communion and other special services."

Mr. Mitzell has been characterized as "a man ahead of his time"—in addition to his pastoral duties, he immediately became active in civic affairs (e.g. the local fire company), and his outgoing personality and his wide range of interests made his pastorate of two and a half years a memorable one. Church membership increased noticeably, ultimately to the highest in this century. One of the conditions contributing to this was his serving as manager of the town's baseball team (which one year won the championship); another was his leadership in the great growth of the Sunday school (which during his pastorate and the decade prior was considered a vital part of any congregation) and his encouraging of many contests for attendance which resulted in friendly rivalry among classes of the local church and in competitive membership contests among other churches of the same denomination in the area (in our Memorial Case is the Bible won by our church in a contest with Christ Reformed Church in Elizabethtown). We add, however, this impressive fact: any member not present on Sunday morning received a visit that very afternoon or at least the next day by Mr. Ernest Albright, the Sunday School Superintendent and a local cobbler.

Numerous items of interest are contained in written records of the Mitzell era. April 17, 1919, Mr. Mitzell was instructed to "buy and send cards to indifferent members," and the time of evening service was changed from 7:00 to 7:30 p.m. during the months of May, June, July, and August. In June of that year permission was given to the choir to hold a musicale the last Sunday of each month for the purpose of paying off the debt on the electric blower for the pipe organ. The first Sunday in October a "welcome-home service for our soldier boys" was held. Consistory that month raised Mr. Mitzell's salary to \$800.00 plus payment of half his coal bill. And on October 5 of that year occurred a momentous event regarding the Trustees: they were to select the site for and build an outhouse.

A change was made in financial matters on December 12, 1919: the fiscal year, instead of ending May 1, would now end January 1. Duplex envelopes and a budget system were to be tried for a year, with 100 sets at twelve cents each ordered, followed by an every-member canvass in January of 1920. On January 11, 1920, the office of Benevolent Secretary was created.

Mr. Mitzell, having been ordained March 20, 1920, was the next day elected full-time minister of Maytown Reformed Church at an annual salary of \$1,000.00 plus use of the parsonage. In June of that year, the Reverend Mr. Mitzell consented to take on the duties of janitor of the church for the

following year, Mr. Frank Houseal having resigned the position. In September, Mr. Mitzell's salary was raised again: to \$1,200.00 plus payment of half his coal bill.

October 17, 1920, the Trustees are mentioned again: they were to "erect a double comfort station on the church property at once." On the same date, it was ordered that a filter be put into the cistern at the parsonage, and the weekly envelope system was to be continued, 85 sets being ordered.

An Ushers Association and a Junior Ushers Association were formed December 20, 1920; some of our present elderly members were charter members of these groups.

On March 13, 1921, the Music Committee was commended for "its arduous labors in paying the organist during the past 10 or 15 years. The salary of the organist is herewith raised from \$25.00 to \$50.00 per year, payment to come from Consistory."

An interesting action was mentioned but never taken: The Consistory authorized Reverend Mitzell to announce a Congregational Meeting for Sunday, April 10, for the purpose of adopting a Constitution modeled after the present bylaws, omitting the obsolete parts and amending the same, with clauses expressing the life of our people today. Also, the adoption of a New Testament saint as patron, or a Christian virtue, the same to be attached to the corporate term in ecclesiastical usage." That was recorded March 23, 1921; but April 8 it was "postponed until a more opportune time."

As the year 1921 drew to a close, Consistory, as a committee, was to "take the drafted Constitution to some authority in Lancaster Classis to have it examined." The date of this decision was October 7, when Consistory also listened to a Mr. Keller's proposal for a new furnace in the church at a cost of \$290.00; on October 9, the Congregation gave approval for a new heating plant and ordered a committee to be appointed to assist the Trustees with the "installation of the same"—which was to be a pipeless furnace. This coal-fired furnace was duly installed in the Sunday School room.

Mr. Mitzell's ministry came to an end with his resignation October 30, 1921, to be effective a month later, he having accepted a call to serve our churches at Fairview and Chicora. There are many today who still remember well and fondly Mr. Mitzell and his brief but productive years as our minister, and it is they who remind us that of his family of four girls and two boys, it is his son Cameron who has become the well-known movie and television actor, Cameron Mitchell.

As 1921 drew to a close: we note that not only was the annual Congregational Meeting held the last Monday in December—it was held the day after Christmas.

The Reverend Charles H. Faust was elected unanimously as minister of Maytown Reformed Church on April 9, 1922, and served until 1928. After the somewhat unorthodox Mitzell era, that of Mr. Faust's seemed pale and tame, and the congregational life reflected this change. It is unfair, however, to be overly harsh on Mr. Faust, because he was basically a fine man and minister; he simply was a different type—what one might hesitatingly call the “usual” minister . . . but unusual in one respect at least: shortly after his arrival, he was given permission to use the pipe organ in the church for practicing.

As one examines the records of these years of the twenties, one is acutely aware of the large part financial matters played in the life of a small church. Mr. Faust's salary was set at \$1,300.00 plus use of the parsonage; but when it came time to pay for his moving expenses, the Trustees were authorized to borrow \$140.00 for that purpose—and this came just a month after they had already assumed a note “proceeds of which were used in payment for hymn books purchased.” Mr. Faust was promised an additional \$100.00 per year in return for his services as janitor of the church. In order to remain financially sound, the church officers voted in November of 1923 to send our quarterly statements to “members in arrears.” July 28, 1924, the minister's salary was raised “to the minimum of \$1,500.00 per year plus parsonage,” but in October of that year the Congregation again authorized the Trustees to borrow money—this time in the amount of \$400.00 “to pay expenses.” By December 8, 1925, a new high in budgets was set: \$1,919.25 for the coming year of 1926, and apportionment was set at \$4.13 per member. September 26, 1926, Trustees again were authorized to borrow money to pay arrears in salaries, “sum not more than \$500.00.” (In addition to the minister's salary, there was also that of the organist—raised on March 4, 1926, to \$1.00 per Sunday for Miss Alberta Boll, replacing Miss Mary Heisey, who had resigned; Miss Grace Henderson was to be assistant.)

Money problems still plagued the congregation. On August 21, 1927, repairs were ordered at the parsonage, resulting from water damage; floors, plastering, and wallpaper hanging were to be done at once—these expenses to be raised “by subscription.”

Late in 1928 the Reverend Mr. Faust resigned—most likely because the church was unable to pay his salary and he had become extremely discouraged. In his last years as minister he did not even keep proper records.

At this point in our history, we pause to narrate THE FANNY JOHNSTON STORY, for the results of Miss Johnston's actions continue to play a large part in the life of our church.

Frances J. Johnston, born in 1841, became acquainted with Maytown

Reformed Church through the marriage of her maternal grandmother, Ann Barr, as third wife of Henry Haines, Jr., in 1845. Upon the death of their mother in 1847 in Virginia, Frances and her sister, Anna Mary, came to live with their grandmother in the Haines home on the Square. In due time both became school teachers in Lancaster city schools. Anna Mary married Alexander Harris, publisher of *Harris' Biographical History of Lancaster County*. Frances maintained her residence on West Vine Street until her death in 1923. Both sisters became affiliated with Faith Reformed Church in Lancaster.

Some time before 1910, contact between the two sisters and the Haines family, headed then by Henry B. Haines, grandson of Henry Haines, Jr., and long-time Trustee of Maytown Reformed Church, was renewed. This relationship made permanent the ties between the sisters and Maytown. Having expressed concern that their mother's burial site was in Virginia, they accepted the offer of Henry B. Haines to have their mother's remains moved to a burial plot in the Haines lot in the Maytown Reformed Cemetery. Mrs. Harris provided \$500.00 for reconstruction of Maytown Square in its present form for the Homecoming Celebration in 1910 and presented a piano to the Reformed Sunday School. Miss Johnston's gift proved much more unusual.

In preparation for the celebration of the church's 152nd anniversary and the 400th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation in 1917, donors were sought for new windows in the church sanctuary. One person contacted, because of her interest in the church, was Miss Johnston. In recognition of the Protestant Reformation, the window placed by Miss Johnston in memory of her mother and grandmother bears the portrait of Ulrich Zwingli, founder of the Reformed Church. This did not meet with her approval: she had desired the Cross and Crown emblem to appear on it.

Following her death in 1923 and the reading of her will, it was learned that she had originally left the residue of her estate, amounting to approximately \$23,000, to Maytown Reformed Church but had, following the discovery of the Zwingli window, changed her will so that the bequest was left to the *cemetery* of Maytown Reformed Church, in which she as well as her mother is now buried (their grave-stone is directly behind the church building facing Coffee Goss Road).

For several years thereafter, all possible improvements, including erection of a handsome iron fence, were made to the church cemetery with the interest from Miss Johnston's bequest. Within five years it became necessary, however, to consider how rapidly accumulating interest could be used. Through consultation with the solicitor of the church, B. Frank Kready, Esq., a determination was made by the Orphans' Court of Lancaster County allowing the excess over and above the amount needed for the care of the cemetery to be used for the upkeep of the church building. Such

determination was based upon the finding that the charter for the cemetery included all ground of both cemetery and church building, thereby bringing the church officials to the conclusion that the church building stood on the cemetery ground. Such money is to be used for upkeep of church property only. This bequest having been made to the Trustees of the Maytown Reformed Church, it is thus that, ever since, our Trustees have available as their main income for maintenance of our church property all annual interest from Miss Johnston's bequest remaining after the cemetery has been properly cared for.

As operation of the church evidently was difficult at times during the Faust pastorate, it becomes clear from church records that alternatives to their remaining a separate congregation were considered. One was forming a charge again with Zion Reformed Church in Marietta, which had extended on December 27, 1923, an invitation to consider formation of the two churches into one pastoral charge. On January 3, 1924, the question was submitted to Maytown Reformed Church and voting done by secret ballot. The result: those in favor—none; those against such a union—49. Shortly before Mr. Faust's departure, the Consistory met on September 21, 1928, with a committee from Lancaster Classis, at that committee's request, to "recommend to the Congregation that they request Lancaster Classis to reconstruct their pastoral charge."

Thus a joint charge was established and the Reverend James B. Musser was called as minister, his time of service beginning June, 1929. Mr. Musser proved to be a godly and scholarly man ministering to parishoners of all ages. It is remembered that children literally ran to meet him when they spied him, which must have been a heart-warming experience to a man who had no children of his own.

It was during his ministry that the Sunshine Bible Class was formed, with Miss M. Ethel Culp as teacher, class and teacher remaining together for the next 25 years and accomplishing many projects for the benefit of the church.

Also during Mr. Musser's years here, the choir was re-organized and presented a full program of special music for all the dedicatory services in 1930. Mrs. Henry L. Haines was director, serving intermittently until 1970. The organist at this time was Miss Adella B. Grove (who during the week gave private piano lessons); upon her death in 1933, Mrs. Joseph Hollenbaugh became organist and, except for short periods of time, she and Mrs. Haines served together as organist and choir director until her retirement in 1963 when she was succeeded by Mrs. George F. Waller as organist (the former Miss Alberta Boll). Mr. George Waller served as choir director periodically from 1930-1970, and the music program of the church during those years was supportive of the whole church program. Special dramatic

and musical programs were given frequently. The church membership always included talented vocalists, and a full choir was possible—their contributions to the church program being a dedicated service by the choir membership and always appreciated by the congregation.

In 1930, from July 6 to 13, occurred one of the biggest weeks in the church's history: Rededication Services. Even at the low rate of interest paid then on savings and investments, over \$5,000.00 had accumulated from Miss Johnston's bequest. Everything possible had been done to the cemetery, and thus when the decision was made that the church could be designated part of the cemetery land the congregation found itself with an exceedingly large sum of money available for very necessary repairs and replacements. The sanctuary was redone "in grand style"—new carpet was laid over the entire floor, chancel furniture was reupholstered, the walls were swirl-plastered and painted buff, the woodwork was antiqued, and four side windows were replaced by stained glass windows. A week prior to the great celebration, after all arrangements had been made, a tornado ripped through Maytown, blowing down the chimney, making a hole in the roof, and sending torrents of rain down upon the brand-new carpet and furnishings. Hasty repairs were made, and re-dedication services began as scheduled on Sunday morning, July 6, with the Reverend George M. Whitmore returned as guest preacher. During that service, two of the new windows were dedicated: the window in memory of Henry A. and Catherine Ann Haines, unveiled by great-grandsons Henry K. and John Edward Haines; and the Calvary window, presented by Mr. and Mrs. Hiram N. Risser, unveiled by their niece, Nancy Spangler, and their nephew, George S. Endslow.

In the afternoon of July 6 another service was held, with the Reverend J. Rauch Stein of Philadelphia as guest preacher. During that service, Jane and Joyce Fryberger unveiled the Escutcheon of the Reformed Church window in memory of their great-great-grandfather, John Hollinger. The evening service featured the Reverend C. M. Mitzell as guest preacher; and, a pageant, *An Age-old Dream*, was presented.

It might be said that this week culminated a "buying spree"; but there was no doubt that improvements to the property were sorely needed and the sudden accumulation of interest from the Johnston bequest proved a god-send.

Concern for the full mission of the Church was always strong in Maytown Reformed Church, and during this time there was great concern evidenced by members that their Apportionment was not being paid. A group of women—Mrs. H. L. Haines, Miss Emily Shireman, Mrs. C. E. Hollenbaugh, Mrs. George Houseal, Miss M. Ethel Culp, and Mrs. Ray

Fryberger—took it upon themselves to rectify the matter. They themselves did the actual canvassing of all other members, and they also made the recommendations that: one side of the duplex envelopes be designated for Benevolence and that as many as could would pay their full share of Apportionment by July 1, that Lenten envelope offerings be applied, and that open offerings at communion services be applied to the Apportionment. By July 1 an evaluation was to be made concerning the need for future fund-raising projects to enable the church to pay its full Apportionment. When this was done, it was learned that by July 1 the entire Apportionment for the year would be paid! Thus stirred to meet its obligations, the congregation continued to do so for many years following.

When the Reverend Mr. Musser resigned in the latter months of 1931, the members of both congregations knew that a good man had served them well and had caused the two churches to work together harmoniously.

Relations with Lancaster Theological Seminary were established, and leaders of the two congregations asked the Seminary for recommendations for a minister to serve them. As a result, Arthur D. Knoebel served the charge as supply minister during his last months in Seminary; and, as graduation date approached, he was offered the call to become full-time minister. He accepted and that spring, 1933, was ordained in the Maytown church and honored at a reception in the Marietta church. Two years later Mr. Knoebel married Miss Marion E. Hoffman of Lebanon, whom he had met through members of the Maytown church.

The Reverend Mr. Knoebel's years as minister were beneficial ones for the two churches. He soon organized a Christian Endeavor Society in Maytown Reformed Church which held Sunday evening services and programs for the youth, and with them he attended County Young People's Conferences. Radio was becoming "a big thing," and on several occasions Mr. Knoebel and choir members and a pianist were heard over the Lancaster station. A drama, *The Conversion of Zaccheus*, written by Mr. Knoebel, was directed by him in both churches with a separate cast from each. A Men's Bible Class taught by Mrs. H. L. Haines grew in numbers and yielded younger leadership of the church.

During these years, when death came to families, it was the custom to hold the funeral service in the home, with members of the church choir assisting the minister. As one looks back, he cannot help observing that during this time many prominent members of the church died, quite a number of whom are, of course, buried in our cemetery.

On June 10, 1973, Mr. Knoebel was guest preacher at the service marking the 208th anniversary of the founding of Maytown Reformed Church—and marking the 40th anniversary of his ordination to the Christian ministry.

The congregation was without a minister only two months following

Mr. Knoebel's departure in March, 1937: in May they greeted the Reverend Alfred L. Creager, also a beginning minister, another of a number who served our church part-time before graduation and then remained some time as full-time minister (of the charge) . . . an arrangement that provided an opportunity for senior students to gain some practical experience and an opportunity for the church to gain youthful, hopeful outlook and leadership (otherwise, because of the continuing inability of the congregation to pay minimum salary, the only recourse would have been to seek the part-time services of retired ministers).

Mr. Creager and his wife began literally with a bare parsonage (living in the Marietta parsonage as had Messrs. Musser and Knoebel) and were obliged to struggle along on a salary of \$1,200.00. One of the Creagers' purchases still remembered by older members is an old Nash car that became for all practical purposes Marietta's ambulance, serving for innumerable emergency trips to the hospital.

Mr. Creager's two and a half years as our minister was a period of growth for both the churches and continued the development of healthy relations between the two congregations. He was especially successful with the Sunday School and with young people, but it must be admitted that our financial situation was such that Mr. Creager finally felt obliged to resign.

*T*he financial situation still seemed to make it impossible for the charge to support a full-time minister, and Lancaster Theological Seminary continued to help us by providing a succession of student ministers who lived in the parsonage (each given his choice: the one in Maytown or in Marietta, the other being rented for the duration of his service), continued his education, and served the charge on a half-time basis. The church life remained strong partly because there was excellent lay activity in each congregation.

The first of these student-minister was William H. Banks, from May, 1940, to April, 1943. He was aided by an exceptionally capable wife, who had a degree in Christian education and who proved to be of great help in both the choir and in the organizations.

These were the war years—the time of World War II and some of our nation's darkest days. Men from our congregation one by one answered the call to colors until an impressive list was finally commemorated on a board erected in the Sunday School room, one of whom ultimately had a gold star placed by his name, Richard H. Albright, Sr.

Mr. Banks was well-liked and seemed to enjoy the work and life here; to all indications he would have remained as full-time minister. But honesty obliges us to state that because of procrastination on the part of congregational leaders no call was issued to him by the time of his gradua-

tion from Seminary and he was obliged to look elsewhere for his first full-time pastorate.

Continued good service from the Seminary brought us next Harold L. Hess, who served us from May of 1943 to February of 1945: it was till war-time, and Mr. Hess completed his seminary education mid-year.

He, too, lived in the Marietta parsonage—and strange as it may seem to young parents today, he regularly walked to our church, pushing his son in his baby-carriage from Marietta to Maytown.

About the time of Mr. Hess's graduation from Seminary and his leaving the charge, word suddenly came to the members of Maytown Reformed Church that the congregation of Zion Church in Marietta had on their own contacted and secured the services of Dr. Robert J. Pilgrim, ordained minister and recently-retired professor at Franklin and Marshall College, he to serve Zion Reformed Church only. This came as quite a surprise to the Maytown church, for they had anticipated a continuing relationship with Zion Church, the two churches to be served by student-ministers.

A committee composed of Henry L. Haines, George F. Waller, and Charles E. Hollenbaugh met with the Reverend L. C. T. Miller of Elizabethtown, president of Lancaster Synod. It was his suggestion that, since Marietta had secured the services of Dr. Pilgrim, Maytown might secure the services of another recently-retired professor of Franklin and Marshall College, Dr. Victor W. Dippell—for Maytown could not support even a student-minister alone. Dr. Dippell agreed; Synod renewed the assignment each annual meeting; Dr. Dippell's wife transferred her membership to Maytown Reformed Church, even though they continued to live in Lancaster, and she remained a member until her death; and Dr. Dippell served Maytown Reformed Church faithfully from 1945 until 1957. During these years the attendance and membership gradually increased and Dr. Dippell commanded great respect and affection because of his experience as minister and college professor, which made it possible for him to serve members of all ages in the congregation. He accepted a nominal salary, feeling it a great opportunity for him to serve a church rooted and grounded in the Reformed faith. Present-day members who knew him look back upon him as a much-beloved minister.

Dr. Dippell especially enjoyed a close friendship with older members and residents of the community, one of these—met through Henry B. Haines—being George B. Drabenstadt, a senior member of a Philadelphia accounting firm who in 1929 had bought the M. R. Hoffman home on South River Street and had established there a residence for his two sisters and himself. For some years Mr. Drabenstadt spent only weekends here, but in a short time he established very close relations with the people of Maytown. His philanthropic nature caused him to find out where there were personal needs and good projects for public support; one of his annual

gifts was a substantial monetary gift, given through the minister of each church, to the church organists of the community.

His friendship with Dr. Dippell resulted in his regular attendance at services in Maytown Reformed Church, his respect for Dr. Dippell and his appreciation of the music of the church (particularly the organ program presented by Mrs. Joseph Hollenbaugh) being the two main reasons for his attending, although he never officially became a member. (He himself was an organist: in his home he had installed a large electronic organ heard early every Sunday morning, to the delight of his neighbors.) A further example of his generosity and his interest in music was his having installed in the tower of St. John's Lutheran Church a set of chimes electronically operated from the organ console and, whenever he was home, played daily by him to the enjoyment of the entire community.

In 1951, an extensive renovation of the church was planned, and especially was much done in the chancel area. Mr. Drabenstadt himself paid the entire cost of having the organ rebuilt: originally a "Carnegie" organ built by the Moeller Company that had been electrified during the Reverend Mr. Lowe's time. During the rebuilding, the console was moved from in front of the organ chamber to its present site on the opposite side of the chancel area. Thanks to the suggestion of Mr. Walter Gundling, who rebuilt the organ, that the original pipes dating from 1907 be melted down and recast into new pipes, the result was an organ far superior in tonal quality to an ordinary organ of that size even though the final cost was only \$8,000.00. The plaque on the organ chamber reads: In honor of the Reverend V. W. Dippell and Anna Heisey Hollenbaugh and in memory of Anna Drabenstadt Welchans—1952.

Additional projects sponsored by Mr. Drabenstadt included placing protective glass storm windows over the sanctuary windows and installation of lavatories. Along with this, Mr. Drabenstadt was a generous contributor to the program of the church.

A complete re-arrangement of the chancel was designed by the Reverend Henry Kready Haines, a son of the congregation. The platform was extended across the entire front of the chancel, the railing was extended, pews for the choir were installed on the south side, and behind the altar was placed a maroon velvet dossal suspended from a keystone arch, given in memory of Hetty Hicks Davis by her husband, Albert Davis. A new altar, also designed by Mr. Haines, was built by the Hoffer Planing Mill of Elizabethtown and finished by Mr. Haine's father, Henry L. Haines. The altar was dedicated in April of 1952 in honor of Henry B. Haines and his wife, Miriam Longenecker Haines; and in memory of his sister, Annie Haines Mackley; and of his grandson, Henry K. Haines, whose death had occurred in March, the dedication led by the brother-in-law of Henry K.

Haines, the Reverend Vernon H. Baum.

Perhaps all this—that the church was functioning well under a beloved minister and was able to secure and enjoy the facilities contributing to a most worshipful atmosphere primarily through the generosity of Mr. Drabenstadt and to a lesser degree the members of the congregation—explains why the congregation by 1957, when Dr. Dippell was obliged to retire after 12 years of faithful service, faced a very serious situation. Again they had to ponder the question of their future and the kind of ministry they could obtain and support, largely because during those years there had been a lack of personal commitment to stewardship.

The obvious solution, as Marietta was also again without a minister, seemed to be that of resuming a joint charge. And so, shortly after Dr. Dippell's departure, the Reverend William A. Ellsworth, Jr., came from Littlestown to be minister of both churches.

Mr. Ellsworth saw as his prime goal that of improving the activities and general health of the life of the church. He organized and led a Bible Study Prayer Group that was very successful and most satisfying to those participating. He was aided greatly by his wife, especially with the Women's Organization. But his plan to re-organize the Sunday School according to the plan set up by the Christian Education Department of our denomination met with serious opposition, and as a result the Sunday School deteriorated—as so did attendance at morning worship, to an average of ten (though the few attending benefitted much from the services because at no time was the controversy in the congregation reflected from the pulpit).

It was during Mr. Ellsworth's brief tenure that a new furnace was installed in the parsonage, an oil-fired hot-water system with baseboard heating units.

Conditions between minister and people did not, however, improve, and the dissatisfaction was more and more indicated through decreasing financial support. In October of 1959 Mr. Ellsworth's ministry to Maytown Reformed Church came to an end, the dissolution of the relationship between minister and charge by action of Lancaster Synod.

There was no doubt: Maytown Reformed Church faced a crisis.

The Reverend Richard H. Winters, associate dean at Franklin and Marshall College and a friend of some members of the congregation, offered to become supply minister at only \$25.00 per Sunday. He had a deep interest in Maytown and committed himself to rebuilding and reunifying the congregation so that a healthy situation could be once again presented to a new minister. His short term of service (October, 1958-July, 1959) indicates that he accomplished his purpose; and, on recommendation of Dr. Truman Crist, president of Synod, the congregation elected the Reverend Charles L. Wentling, who served both churches as a joint charge.

Mr. Wentling's ministry began well: he was a dynamic preacher, a good organizer, and a good minister capable of serving both churches with great benefit. Attendance again picked up, and organizations improved in their attendance and work.

But after about a year it became evident to members of Maytown Reformed Church that he was not satisfied, and eventually it was learned that he had negotiated with Zion Reformed Church in Marietta to serve them, apart from Maytown Reformed Church, as full-time minister. Maytown reluctantly agreed to this, partly because he had agreed originally to serve the charge for five years. When he assumed the sole pastorate of Zion Church in Marietta he promised to serve them at least two years, to establish them firmly; but, in less than a year he left Zion Church to become minister of a church in Baltimore. (Members of both churches felt that, had he served as first indicated—five years as minister of the joint charge—both churches would have greatly benefitted. Mr. Wentling, though not a college or seminary graduate, was effective in his brief ministry here; and, it seems to have been with sorrow more than with any other emotion that the people witnessed his departure. He had been reared a member of the Reformed Church but had become a Baptist when he felt "called to preach" at the age of 16.)

A second time the Reverend Mr. Winters came to the aid of our congregation, this time at their invitation. The year September 1961-September 1962 saw the congregation once again improve under the stabilizing influence of this tolerant and understanding man. The autumn of 1962 he conveyed to officers of the church his feeling that they, no longer associated with Zion Church in Marietta, should contact Lancaster Theological Seminary regarding the use again of students at the Seminary as part-time ministers.

This was done, and for one year—September 1962-June 1963—our congregation was served by William A. Seaman, a young man well liked and especially successful with the various groups in the church and with the shut-ins. His ministry was a short one but is recalled with pleasure and was a time when the church grew again and renewed its spiritual life.

When the time for Mr. Seaman's graduation from Seminary and departure from our congregation drew near, our people felt that they should continue this relationship with the Seminary: the church could not afford a full-time minister, and Zion Church in Marietta had no interest in re-establishing a union relationship with the Maytown church. Thus the arrangement with the Seminary proved mutually beneficial, in that it provided opportunities for young men to secure practical experience and some financial aid while completing their Seminary studies, and the church received youthful and optimistic leadership.

Upon the recommendation of Mr. Seaman, the Reverend John D. Gunson served our congregation next, from 1963 to 1965. Mr. Gunson, a native of Australia desirous of completing Seminary work not available to him in his home country, remains one of the most beloved ministers of our history. He came ready and willing but without furniture or furnishings, and our parsonage had never been provided as a furnished home. Under the chairmanship of Mrs. Martin Musser, members of the congregation rallied to the cause and provided their "Aussie" and his wife and two children with a comfortable if somewhat mis-matched home during his time here. The challenge soon became a delightful experience and their stay a most beneficial event to all. Mr. Gunson was a man of understanding and experience, of deep spiritual conviction, of modest and sincere manner that appealed to all; and he became quietly but effectively a leader in the community as well as in his church. It was with pride that Maytown Reformed Church saw their minister receive both the Bachelor of Divinity and the Master of Religious Education degrees at the same time—a first in the history of Lancaster Theological Seminary.

A memorable date occurred in our church's history during Mr. Gunson's pastorate: our 200th anniversary. For this occasion, special services were held the last two Sundays of June, 1965. At the first, on June 20, the sermon was delivered by the Reverend Richard H. Winters; on June 27, the Reverend Mr. Gunson preached the sermon.

In addition to the morning worship services, the Bicentennial Committee consisting of Mrs. Ray Fryberger and Miss Grace Henderson, co-chairmen; and Donald B. Drager and George W. Glattacker prepared a 200th anniversary booklet that contained a brief history of the congregation, order of service for both worship services, and listing of church officers. A picture of the church appeared on the front cover, and a portrait of the Reverend Mr. Gunson faced the front page. Further celebrations planned by this committee included a hymn-sing the evening of June 20 and a supper and program on June 27, during which a display of historic memorabilia and a presentation of the history of Maytown Reformed Church by Mrs. Henry L. Haines were featured.

Although it had been known from the start that the Reverend Mr. Gunson would return to his homeland upon completion of his studies at Lancaster Theological Seminary, his departure was a sad and thought-provoking occasion for the congregation of Maytown Reformed Church. Mr. Gunson himself, as the time for his leaving approached, became increasingly concerned about the future of the congregation. He therefore initiated a self-study that resulted in two definite conclusions: few members had been added in recent years; and, within ten years the membership would be very low—our church was not an "old" church in the sense that the majority were elderly people; but, it was a small one that sorely needed

replacements and additions.

Mr. Gunson's successor, the Reverend Burr L. Lounsbury, Jr., arrived in September, 1965. During his first year as a student at Lancaster Theological Seminary, Mr. Lounsbury had served a church in Ephrata, which had then merged with another. Mr. Lounsbury being thus in need of a part-time position, officials at the Seminary recommended him as our next student minister.

The following spring and summer, efforts were made to re-establish once again the joint Maytown-Marietta Charge. On August 10, 1966, the Reverend Richard Whitney of the Penn Central Conference Staff was asked to meet with the Consistory; in the meantime, a letter was sent to all our members for the purpose of getting their feelings in the matter. On September 14 he did meet with our Consistory, but by October 12 "no conclusive information from the congregation had been obtained." The church leaders of both congregations, however, continued to work with Mr. Whitney and ultimately came up with a plan for a "Co-operative Parish." On May 3, 1967, this was agreed upon by the committee from both Consistories. When it was presented to our congregation, it was accepted unanimously and the committee members were urged to continue working out details. But the Marietta congregation voted it down almost 2-1, presumably because the financial arrangement was not a 50-50 one but was based on each congregation's membership, resulting in 35.4% to be paid by Maytown and 64.6% by Marietta. Mr. Whitney did reply that he would try further discussion with the Marietta congregation but would seek us a new supply when Mr. Lounsbury graduated from Seminary if there was no acceptance of the Co-operative Parish by Marietta. Our leaders asked Marietta for word of their definite intentions by August 1, 1967, but no further progress was ever made.

Mr. Lounsbury, though perhaps not one of our greatest preachers, was an excellent pastor and came to be loved and respected through repeated contacts with his members. Having been a native of New England, he had been reared a member of the Congregational Church but became deeply interested in our heritage as he came to understand our creeds and creedal heritage. Once again Maytown had a Reformed minister who was the town "jitney" driver for emergency hospital trips, and our parsonage was a lively place because it housed Mr. and Mrs. Lounsbury and their five children.

A man of depth, Mr. Lounsbury honored the congregation by asking that his ordination be conducted in our church; and on July 16, 1967, the service was held, with the guest preacher delivering one of the finest sermons ever in our church.

The Reverend Mr. Lounsbury did not accept a call to a full-time position until late summer, and our leaders had not made active efforts to secure

his successor. Thus, when he did leave Maytown near the end of August, our congregation discovered that all the current Seminary students were spoken for. However, one student had enrolled much later, and thus it was that our new student minister was Daniel W. Grauberger, elected July 19, 1967, and moving into the parsonage with his family in September. He remained with us until his graduation four years later, because at this time the Seminary strongly urged that students who were employed part-time take four years to complete the course for the Master of Divinity degree instead of the usual three years.

Mr. Grauberger's tenure was one of some uncertainty, experimentation, and changes. In September of 1967 a new order of worship was instituted. January 21, 1968, Miss Grace Henderson retired as Sunday School Superintendent after 25 years of service. In February, a Parsonage Committee was named for the first time (initial members: Norman A. Houseal and Lafayette J. Kurtz). In March, it was voted to include in the packets of envelopes a monthly envelope for the Improvement Fund. On September 10, Deacons for the first time were asked to serve as Budget Committee, to prepare a tentative budget for the presentation to the Consistory prior to the annual Congregational Meeting. Their first effort was presented and accepted, but it was quite evident that at present the income side was far short of the expenditures side if any benevolent contributions were to be made.

About this time, word came from Conference that, beginning in 1969, giving to our Church World Mission would be on a self-assigned basis instead of the traditional Apportionment, 30% of the Current Expenses being suggested.

At the November 19, 1968, Consistory meeting note was taken of "the worsening financial position of the church." No decisions were made, but the Financial Secretary agreed to furnish to the minister names of members who had not been contributing so that he might visit them in hopes of encouraging them to see their financial obligations.

Other changes were made. Instead of the traditional four communions, six were held, the two additional being the first Sunday in Advent and the first Sunday in Lent. On January 19, 1969, the Congregation voted that funds from the Improvement Fund be used for the parsonage *or* the church, wherever they were more needed. Consistory voted on March 11 to have the Spiritual Council examine the membership "to see if any names should be dropped" (and, based on subsequent membership lists, some were); the next order for church envelopes was for 60. From August, 1969, to August, 1970, one service a month was held in the first-floor meeting room, but few elderly or infirm availed themselves of this opportunity to worship and avoid the long flight of stairs to the second-floor sanctuary. For 1971, 50 sets of envelopes were ordered. On the practical side, the community having had a water and sewage system installed, it was voted to hook up the par-

sonage but not the church, the decision being "paying the penalty and not connecting the church for the time being." (Shortly afterwards, new Trustees voted to connect and said action was speedily done.)

Sometime during the autumn of 1970 the Congregation, realizing that their student minister would be graduating and leaving the following spring, considered the possibility of forming with Donegal Presbyterian Church a federated charge. On October 25, however, of the sixteen members present at a special Congregational meeting, the majority voted for action "other than any kind of connection with Donegal Presbyterian Church." Therefore, the Seminary was again contacted, this time regarding the possibility of securing the services of a retired minister. Dr. Alfred Bartholomew, on behalf of the Seminary, assured our congregation that either a retired minister or another student would be available.

On April 6, 1971, 50 sets of church envelopes were ordered. The application of Paul N. Marsteller, a former public school teacher currently completing his Junior year at the Seminary, was read. Subsequently a call was extended to him, and in June, 1971, he moved into the parsonage and has served the congregation to the time of this writing—two years as student minister and, following ordination and installation on June 24, 1973, as first full-time minister of Maytown Reformed Church since Mr. Wentling's pastorate.

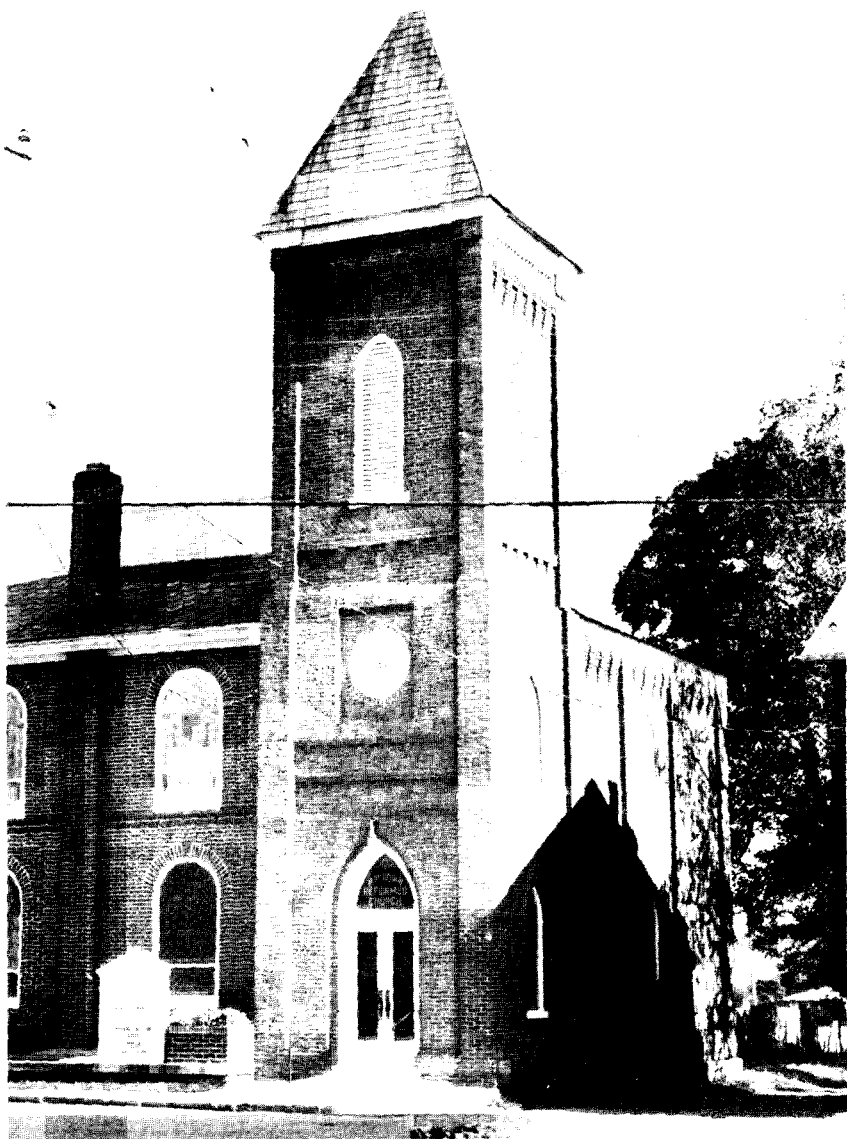
Thus, we come to the present—and I write these final words in the first person.

Following my graduation from Lancaster Theological Seminary in May of 1973, I was ordained into the Christian ministry in Maytown Reformed Church, an occasion that was memorable for me in several ways: this had been my mother's home church, the date was my father's birthday and he preached the sermon, and it signified the common desire of the congregation and me to resume a full-time ministry.

Together, we have worked towards the renewal of both congregation and building.

A dedicated staff of teachers has conducted an excellent church school that includes tots to adults. Each month a group has met for Bible Study. The Men's Fellowship and the United Church Women have each met monthly and contributed much to the work and the support of the church. Frequent social events have bound the membership closer in fellowship: covered-dish suppers, the Shrove Tuesday "Films and Fasnachts" evening (featuring old-time movies), the annual Halloween party, the church picnic.

Our church building has been improved both inside and out: members themselves have repainted the church school room; they then accomplished in one week's time the complete repainting of the sanctuary; the Trustees



Front main entrance and tower of the Maytown Reformed Church as it appears today. Photo by John S. Bradley, III.

saw to the repair and repainting of the church tower; and the congregation's Bicentennial commemoration was the sandblasting of the brick exterior and repainting of woodwork. Future projects include the purchase of new carpet for the sanctuary, refinishing of church school chairs and the sanctuary pews, and installation of an inclinor so that the elderly and handicapped may continue to attend worship services in the upstairs sanctuary.

Worship, of course, remains paramount—in regular Sabbath services and in special seasonal services during the church year.

Though our membership is still low, it has increased and our budget has been increased and met each year. A prime goal of mine has been continuing this process so that in due time we may offer at least minimum salary and be able to continue under full-time ministers.

Maytown Reformed Church looks back over a long and rich heritage, a heritage that is both an object of pride and a reminder of responsibilities. With Christ's help, and with dedication equal to that of their forefathers, members of Maytown Reformed Church march confidently into the future, to serve both God and fellow men.

* * *

Afterward

Within eight months—September, 1976, and May, 1977—death claimed two people largely responsible for this history. Many praiseworthy things can and have been said about Henry and Anna Haines, but one trait stands foremost: their loyalty to Christ's Church. Through good times and bad, their attendance, support, service, leadership never wavered. The Church was truly the center of their lives, and in the very most basic meaning of the word they were workers in their Master's Vineyard.

To me, they had also become friends. I miss them keenly, but my life has been the richer for having known them.

—Rev. Paul N. Marsteller

Editor's note: Mr. Marsteller left his pastorate at Maytown in 1977 to accept a call from the United Church of Christ at Alexandria, Pa. He presently has a charge in Winchester, Virginia.