

HERITAGE HORIZONS

NORTH AMERICAN BAPTIST HERITAGE COMMISSION

Celebrating a Rich Past ... Inspiring a Promising Future

FALL 2022

A Heritage Commission Update

By Randy Tschetter

When I googled NAB Heritage Commission recently, a red box appeared that read, “Temporarily Closed.” Nothing could be further from the truth. Social distancing, staggered work hours, and vaccinations have enabled the Archives to remain open, even during the height of the COVID pandemic. Although Darlene and I are both part-time employees, there is usually someone in the Archives each day from Monday through Friday to answer questions, respond to requests for information, and welcome visitors, who are always welcome.

Randy is responsible for general oversight of the Archives. He does the research and writing of stories for *Onward* and *Heritage Horizons*. With much help from friends, he spent many hours early this summer downsizing the belongings of former missionaries Dr. George and Daphne Dunger and then sifting through the boxes of files and documents that remained (see story on page 3).



Darlene Frueh is updating the list of personal files that are housed in the Archives – identifying photos of former seminary students and linking maiden names with married names.

Luci Lengefeld took a break in August to visit her family in Japan, but she continues to write and update NAB church histories – some of which are accessible on the Heritage Commission webpages.

Lana Fokken continues to scan documents related to the NAB Conference and seminary. Some of the scanned items have already been added to the Heritage Commission webpages. The list on the following page includes other documents scanned and saved on our Heritage Commission hard drive. Contact us by phone or email if you need specific information (rtschetter@nabconf.org or 605-274-2702).

Women's Ministries

For the Heart of a Woman (1992–2004)

Gleanings (1987–2008)

Heart of a Leader (2004–2005)

NAB Women's Missionary Ministry Fellowship

North American Baptist / Sioux Falls Seminary

Impact (1970–2018)

Profiles

NAB Conference

Intercessor (1998–2019)

NAB Link (1987–1995)

NAB Today (1996–2008)

Servant Link (2015–2016) ☐

An Interesting NAB Story



Mildred Schindler Janzen is a life-long member of First Baptist Church in Lorraine, Kansas. Her book, *Surviving Hitler – Evading Stalin*, is a fascinating and compelling story of a young woman who survived grave dangers as she was blessed and protected by the hospitality of family, friends, and strangers! ☐

First Baptist Church in Emery, South Dakota –

A Multiplying Church

There is a saying in NAB circles: “All roads lead through Emery.” While that is not literally true, it does indicate that First Baptist Church in Emery, South Dakota, has had a significant impact in our denominational history. People with Emery connections can be found in churches and positions of leadership in places all across North America and beyond. The following is a brief history of one of many flagship NAB churches. It is available at the Archives and online.

Multiplication! This was the hallmark of the First Baptist Church of Emery, South Dakota, in its early years. Having been organized on February 24, 1886, as the German Baptist Church, by 1895 the membership had grown to eighty from the original sixteen charter members, a remarkable feat considering:

- twenty-four members were sent to Unityville in 1890 to establish the church there,
- twenty-four organized the Avon church,
- twenty-eight organized the Chancellor church, and
- twelve organized the Corona church.

The church's website includes the following historical overview:

Reverend Ottje Olthoff was the first minister. Most of the pioneers had been raised in true Christian Lutheran homes. After studying scripture, they came to the realization that the scriptural form of baptism was by immersion.

The first meeting took place in a country schoolhouse in which the church incorporated a certificate by the state on April 15, 1891, becoming the first Baptist church to organize in Hanson County, thus the fifth to organize in the Dakota Territory.

On March 10, 1891, the contract for the first house of worship was located four miles southwest of Emery, where the community cemetery is now located. By 1895, the church had grown to eighty members.

In December of 1901 to 1908, the church had moved to the schoolhouse in Emery. A new church was built in Emery at the present site in 1908.

The German language was discontinued in 1917, and services began to be held in English. On September 7, 1940, the name of the church was amended and changed from German Baptist Church to the First Baptist Church of Emery, South Dakota. On March 24, 1963, our present church was built, covering 19,000 square feet, and was dedicated March 22, 1964.

Sons and daughters who became pastors and missionaries include names such as John Olthoff, Randy Tschetter, Dan Edzards, John L. Terveen, Rick Weber, Ken Ontjes, Myrtle Weeldreyer (Schaub), Oryn Meinerts, and Lucille Wipf (Dalzell).

Building on 136 years of history and ministry, First Baptist continues to serve God under the leadership of John Gilliland and Alec Bell. □

A Heritage Commission Tribute

By Randy Tschetter



Dr. George Dunger

For the past several years, I have been actively involved in the affairs of the George Dunger family. The processes of assisting his daughters Daphne and Amaryllis in selling a house, moving into and out of an apartment, transitioning to assisted living, and finally moving to

nursing home care has required hours of planning and work. Following a garage sale earlier this summer and several trips to various charitable outlets, I found myself in possession of numerous boxes of files filled with personal correspondence, academic documents, class syllabi, archival notes

and plans, and numerous other items that had once belonged to Dr. George Dunger.

In his family, Dr. Dunger was, and is still, affectionally known as Papa or Uncle Albert. Born in Germany in 1908, he immigrated to the United States in 1930, where he met and married Louise Krack. In 1937, the couple were appointed as missionaries to Cameroon, where their daughter Daphne was born in 1939; she later served as a missionary nurse in Cameroon. George and Louise remained as missionaries until 1948 – laying foundations for the work in Warwar, Ndu, and Great Soppo – when they returned to the US due to health issues. Following the completion of his Ph.D., he joined the faculty of North American Baptist Seminary,



George, Louise, & Daphne

where he taught from 1951 to 1973. Following “retirement,” he served as the archivist for the North American Baptist Conference from 1981 to 1999 – paving the way for Dr. Ernie Zimbelman, Dr. George W. Lang, Dr. Jackie Howell, and myself in the ministry of the Heritage Commission.

Dr. Dunger’s letters, especially his personal letters to Daphne, reveal his many passions and interests. Although he was reputed to be a deep thinker and theologian who wrote of himself, “Perhaps I have never stopped being a dreamer,” he was also committed to caring for the daily, physical needs of his family. His letters often included reports about mundane things like car repairs, heating bills, winter driving, Christmas gifts given and received, medical appointments, etc.



Orville Meth, Irma Meth, George Dunger, & Bea Westerman

working in an institutional environment and finding the time or energy to write and publish about his ministry experiences.

Dr. Dunger also had a keen interest in and understood the importance of preserving and documenting NAB history, as demonstrated by his commitment to the NAB Heritage Commission. In typical Dunger-style, he wrote, “Archival holdings are authenticating the evidence of work accomplished.” Perhaps he was thinking more of his personal documents when he later wrote, “Why keep all of this stuff? There is nothing lasting about it.” He speculated that Daphne and Amie would have to dispose of the boxes of files that included items like greeting cards, credit card receipts, and unidentified photos. As it turned out, that task fell into my hands.

Above all, Dr. Dunger desired to be a faithful servant of God who lived and finished life well. In a letter in June 1980, he wrote: “Have I really accomplished the MISSION God gave me? What is left of my life here on earth? What can I do to complete my mission? Because I do not want to die with the thought of having left things undone” ☐



Professor Dunger

As a seminary professor, he challenged students: “Be trend-makers – not trend-takers,” using the guidance of the Holy Spirit to learn from past experiences as a “guide to make trends in anticipation of what the future demands of you.” His personal challenges involved a tension of



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