

## SALFORD MEMORIES

BY WILLARD C. SHISLER

The Salford Church has a very interesting history and especially so because of its connection with Christopher Dock. I have assembled some facts, names and dates from our past using materials gathered for term papers at Christopher Dock High School by Ruth Landis Swartley and Paul L. Shisler.

### Origin

As early as 1683 Mennonites came to Germantown. From there they started to move into the surrounding country looking for farmland. In 1702 they settled what is now Lower Skippack Mennonite Church. In 1710 they settled in what is now called Salford Mennonite Church. For many years this congregation was referred to in the community as "Clemens's", since it was adjacent to the farm of Jacob Clemens (now the home of Sallie Landis).

The first meeting house, which was built in 1738, on land from the farm of pioneer Henry Ruth, was used for both school and church until it was too small for both. At this time a special lot was purchased in Harleysville for a schoolhouse.

In 1770 this church building was replaced by a larger building for both school and worship. The school in Harleysville was sold in 1771.

The school room in the church was used until 1842 when an octagon schoolhouse was built. This was used until 1885 when a larger schoolhouse was erected.

The third meetinghouse was built in 1850 and in 1897 an addition was added to the 1850 structure.

The fourth and present meetinghouse, 55 by 88 in size, was erected of brick at a cost of \$22,000.

In 1954 additional classrooms were built above the back anteroom and in 1956 three more were built above the front anterooms.

In 1972 an addition was completed and furnished for \$192,120.08.

### 1924 - 1974 Activities

The first service, according to record of Issac Clemmer, was held in the new meetinghouse December 21, 1924, with Jonas Mininger, A. G. Clemmer and Charles Kolb present.

The first funeral service in the 1924 building was: Asher, son of Elmer and Alice Clemmer. Died January 15, 1925; was killed under a heavy truck. (Records of Henry H. Ruth)

Those who became members in 1925:

Lewis M. Alderfer  
Erma Alderfer  
Pearl Alderfer  
Elmira Nyce  
Eva Ruth  
Ella Ruth

Mary Clemens  
Eva Clemens  
Dorothy Hoffman  
Mary Hoffman  
Isaiah Landes  
Susan Landes

The Dorcas Sewing Circle was organized November 8, 1934, at the home of Edna Weber Rhines. The first president was Mrs. Marvin Anders.

The Junior Sewing Circle was organized in 1935 at the home of Mrs. James Shisler.

The first Young People's Bible Meeting was held on January 2, 1945, Earl Clemens, Cyrus Landes and Jacob Allebach served as the first committee.

The Salford Missionary Project met for the first time on March 21, 1949. Officers elected were: President, Claude Groff; Vice-President, Harrison Hackman; Sec'y-Tres., Paul Moyer.

The first Summer Bible School was held on Saturday afternoons in the Salford School house in 1935. Mrs. Hartley Rhines started the work and taught the older children.

During 1936 the children were bussed to Bible School at Lansdale Mission. From 1937 to 1944 the children from Salford attended Summer Bible School at Spring Mount, except for the years of gas rationing. In 1945 the first Bible School was started at Salford. It was taught by Mrs. Hartley Rhines, Mrs. Earle Alderfer, Mrs. Allen Godshall and Mrs. Leidy Meyers.

Winter Bible Study was started in 1938 and in 1958 the highest attendance was 395.

In 1955 a disaster committee was started.

In 1956 a Home Department was started.

Evening Services were started in 1918 and then discontinued in 1958 in favor of having church every Sunday morning.

The Spring Mount Church was started by interested people from Salford.

Sunday School was started about 1889 with Allen Freed first superintendent; followed by: John Clemmer, Emos Godshall, Isaac Derstine, Norman Hess, William Kulp, Maurice Kerr, Samuel Landis, Jacob Clemmer, Isaiah Landis, Willard Shisler, Marvin Anders, Sr., Howard Clemmer, Henry Ruth, Russell Clemmer, Harold Alderfer, Earl Frankenfield, Paul Willouer, Willis Miller, Jonas Clemmer, Elmer Frederick, Willis Detweiler, Francis Kulp, Jacob Moyer, Melvin Landis, Harlan Anders, Wellington Alderfer, Glen Frederick, Lawrence Kratz, James Derstine, Walter Maust.

The Sunday School was served by many secretaries some of whom were: Elwood Groff, Horace Shisler, Allen Alderfer, Stanley Alderfer, Royden Landis, Melvin Landis, Norman Derstine, Abram H. Alderfer, Clyde Landis, Rowan Delp, Walter Maust, Larry Groff, Sharon Hunsberger, Durrell Alderfer, Harlan Anders, Abram C. Landis, Kenneth Derstine.

Many of the committees and their functions and work were started and operated by the sisters of this congregation. One of these is the Volunteers to the State Hospital, who a few years ago was publicly acknowledged by a former governor of Pa. This work was started by Mary Lederach, Stella Ruth, Sallie Landis and Kathryn Shisler in the spring of 1958.

The Library was blessed by the help of many talented sisters who have seen that good books were selected and read.

The Women's Fellowship is also a very active organization doing work in many areas.

There are many committees representing the church and Sunday school; for a list of these, check the Salford Church Directory of 1972-73. Page 32 & 33 note that out of all these offices and positions 62 are filled by sisters and 68 by brethren.

From the records of Horace F. Shisler:

1936	
<u>Officer</u>	<u>Present</u>
Rein Alderfer	46 Sundays
Isaiah Landis	50
Elias Landis	47
Henry Ruth, Sr.	35
Jacob Clemmer	50
Enos Godshall	48
Allen Nyce	47
Melvin Alderfer	52
Horace Alderfer	52
George Clemens	50

Average Sunday school attendance by year:

1933 - 300	1939 - 385
1934 - 337	1940 - 388
1935 - 354	1941 - 352
1936 - 361	1942 - 356
1937 - 375	1943 - 365
1938 - 389	1944 - 350
1945 - 351	

Church leaders at Salford: One of the earliest leaders at Salford was Christian Funk, a circuit preacher who preached at Salford and Franconia. Others were: Dielman Kolb, 1691 - 1756; Andrew Zeigler, 1731 - 1811; Grandson of Dielman Kolb, Christian Haltteman, 1744 - 1833; Isaac Clemens, 1813 - 1895; Henry Bower, 1836 - 1909; Jacob C. Moyer, 1893 - 1921; Henry H. Clemmer, ordained deacon Nov. 14, 1888, ordained minister, Oct. 22, 1908, died Nov. 23, 1936. Rein Alderfer, ordained May 27, 1915; Elias M. Landis ordained Oct. 24, 1928; Henry Ruth, Jr. ordained Dec. 11, 1951; Willis Miller ordained Dec. 3 1961, and commissioned as Overseer for the Middle District of Franconia Conference on Jan. 6, 1974.

Clayton Swartzentruber began serving as Minister of Christian Education on Feb. 1, 1970.

John Ruth began serving as Associate Minister on Feb. 1, 1972.

Clayton Byler served 1 year

James Derstine served for two summers.

Deacons that served at Salford during the years are: Christian Moyer, 1705 - 1787; Abram Reiff -1763; Jacob Kolb, 1745 - ; John Lederach, 1775 - 1848; Benjamin Detweiler, 1793 - 1868; Henry C. Kolb, 1812 - 1894; Henry M. Clemmer, 1849 - 1936; Isaac M. Clemmer ordained June 31, 1902; Henry M. Ruth, 1877 - 1955; and Willard C. Shisler.

A few paragraphs from the records of these men:

"Today the 4th of August 1849, I took over the alms book of the Salford congregation as elder, and received in money from the hands of Johannes Berge the sum of one hundred thirty-five dollars and sixteen cents. This I witness with my signature. (This was written in German.)

signed: Benjamin M. Detweiler

Johannes Berge

Abraham Clemmer

"May 26, 1855, we the undersigned audited the alms book of Benjamin Detweiler, deacon of the Salford congregation and found everything in order as to receipts and expenditures, up to this date, also we find that the Salford congregation as of date of this accounting owes Benjamin Detweiler the sum of \$18.78. (Written in German.)

signed: Johanes Berge  
Johanes Fried  
Abram O. Alderfer

"November 3, 1886, paid for a Meeting House in Kansas - \$12.00.

"Today the 29th of April, 1889, have I, Henry M. Clemmer, received the book of alms of the Lower Salford Mennonite Meeting, from the hands of Henry Kulp, deacon, and received from him the just and full amount of Two Hundred and Thirty-six dollars and sixty cents.

witness my own hand: Henry M. Clemmer  
Henry S. Bowers, witness.

"Today, the 10th of January 1910, Have I, Isaac M. Clemmer, received the books of alms of the Lower Salford Mennonite Church from the hand of Henry M. Clemmer, deacon, and received from him the just and full sum of Five Hundred and Eighty seven dollars and eighty-six cents.

signed: Isaac M. Clemmer  
witness: Henry M. Clemmer  
Elias R. Landis

In 1924, the last year for Isaac Clemmer, he disbursed \$187.00.

In 1925, the first year for Henry Ruth, the amount disbursed was \$180.00.

In his first year as deacon, Willard Shisler disbursed \$3,017.20, and in 1964, the last full year of disbursement by Willard Shisler, the amount was \$8,397.48.

In December of 1965 Willis Lederach became Treasurer of Salford Church and all accounts were incorporated. He was Treasurer for 6 years and 3 months. Marvin Anders, Jr. is now serving in this capacity.

The Salford Church was blessed by many leaders in music, and is known for its congregational singing. Some leaders were: William Godshall, Jacob Groff, Allen Nycc, Horace Alderfer, George Clemens, Melvin Alderfer, Earl Clemens, Earl Frankenfield, Harold Alderfer and Roma Ruth.

The Church Council was formed in 1965, and drew up the constitution under which the church now functions. The first members were Samuel Derstine, Marvin Anders, Allen Alderfer, Harold Alderfer, Willis Lederach, Francis Kulp and Samuel Clemens.

Every member of the Salford congregation had their individual part and work in the ongoing work of this church and many did outstanding work who are not mentioned in this report. The Lord is a perfect historian and their work will not be forgotten by Him.

As the last ordained deacon at Salford, I will close with the words I often heard said in German as a testimony after a sermon by deacons and ministers in the Salford pulpit.

"Ich sag ja und amen ... und weider Freiheit."

Willard C. Shisler

*To Margaret Zook - from John Ruth.*

### Salford Leadership Chronology

- 1951 Henry Ruth ordained preacher
- 1954 Willard Shisler ordained deacon
- 1955 Deacon Henry Ruth died.
- 1959 Preacher Elias Landis died.
- 1961 Willis Miller ordained preacher
- 1962 Preacher Rein Alderfer died.
- 1965 Church Constitution adopted, established a Church Council, gave lay-members a voice.
- 1966-67 Clayton Beyeler served as co-minister.
- 1967 Henry Ruth resigned as preacher.
- 1970 Clayton Swartzentruber became Minister of Education.
- 1972 John Ruth appointed co-minister.  
Willis Miller's idea of "Team" of pastoral leaders replaces idea of "Bench."
- 1974 Willis Miller commissioned as Overseer for Middle District of Franconia Conference.
- 1976 Clayton Swartzentruber resigned.  
Willard Shisler resigned.  
Sam Derstine ordained deacon.
- 1978 Loren Swartzendruber came as first full-time minister. Willis Miller and John Ruth remained in associate roles, and with Loren and Deacon Sam Derstine formed the pastoral team.
- 1983 Loren Swartzendruber resigned.  
John Sharp came as Pastor
- 1984 A Board of Elders was added to and included the former Pastoral "Team."  
Administrative Elder (Margaret Zook) added to Pastoral and Other Elders.
- 1985 Elder Clusters  
Roy Musselman chosen as deacon, as Sam Derstine's term ends.
- 1986 Director of Congregational Education proposed.
- 1989 Summer -- John Sharp resigned as Pastor.  
Rodney Derstine became Director of Music.
- 1990 Richard Detweiler served as supplemental preacher at Salford. Also Michael King.  
Sept. 1 -- Rodney Derstine requested release as Music Director. No one appointed to replace him.  
Nov. 18 -- Sam Nyce and Margaret Zook chosen as deacons.
- 1991 Richard Detweiler died September 1991.  
End of year. Willis Miller resigned as Pastor.  
John Holland chosen as youth elder.
- 1992 Jan.-March -- Interim Leadership Team. Michael King and John Ruth, associate pastors.  
James Longacre came as Pastor April 1.
- 1993 John Ruth resigned as Associate Pastor effective in July.  
April 11 Congregation voted 92% in favor of recommendation that "candidates of either gender" could be considered for Youth Minister and Minister of Christian Education.
- 1994 Craig Morton chosen as Associate Pastor.  
Donna Barndt chosen as Minister of Education.  
Marlene Frankenfield chosen as Youth Minister.

Mary: this is what I can find from my records. Hopefully  
it will be what is needed for the Leadership meeting

In Summary:

The "Bench" was in charge until 1965, when a Constitution and Church Council were established.

The congregation got its first full-time professional minister in 1978. The "team" concept, modified in the direction of having one main leader, continued in use.

A ministerial "Team" led the congregation spiritually until 1984.

An Board of Elders was established in 1984, and later expanded.

A Christian Education Cabinet operated in the 1980's, and a Youth Elder was established in 1991. However, there were a series of youth advisors prior to this.

In 1994 both a Youth Minister and a Minister of Christian Education were called.

The congregation chose, at the end of each deacon's term, to continue the use of that office, and have continued it up to the present, adding "deaconess" to "deacon" in 1990.