



# **CHERRY GLADE** MENNONITE CHURCH

## **Out of Our Past and Into the Present**

*A Brief Look 1850 - 2022*

By Lowell Bender



**CHERRY GLADE**  
MENNONITE CHURCH

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## This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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**Cherry Glade Church minutes and notes**

**Recollections from some members**

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en. He hath written it down in a Book. O give me that Book. At any price, give me the Book of God."

The early church and the Anabaptists had that Book as they sought to know the Way. For them, discipleship was very costly. But it was the Way the Lord intended for He has spoken it.

### **Mission**

Today Cherry Glade continues its quest to be Bible centered in its preaching/teaching mission. The "Book"- The Book continues as the anchor for the church. It harkens back to the motto of Menno Simons, "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ." (NIV) This verse is now engraved in the cornerstone at the entrance of the 2008 facility.

O give Cherry Glade that Book that we may read and believe and follow on the Way to heaven. That Book has stood the test of each millennium and will for many more, until the Lord returns in "power and great glory." (Matt. 24:30)



## **Out of Our Past and Into the Present**



### **Early Beginnings**

The beginning of the Cherry Glade Mennonite Church can be traced to the mid 1800s when our Amish Mennonite ancestors began to move into the Casselman Valley region, in Somerset County, Pennsylvania, and Garrett County, Maryland. Some of the families moved south to the Bittinger area or the "Govel Bark" (The Forks), as it was known.

During those early years, the church met in the homes of its members for worship and fellowship. But in 1881, the Casselman Valley Amish Mennonite Churches decided to build four new meeting houses in a single year. The Cherry Glade church house was built near Bittinger, on what is now the Foxtown Road and Maple Glen was built along the Dorsey Hotel road, Grantsville, both in the northern part of Garrett County, Maryland. The other two church houses were built in Summit Mills and Niverton in the southern part of Somerset, Pennsylvania.

In 1895 the Maryland and Pennsylvania churches separated, each then with its own autonomous leadership. In 1896 the Oak Dale church house, near Salisbury, Pennsylvania, was built and shared ministers and deacons with Cherry Glade and Maple Glen on a rotating basis. During this time, church services were alternated by meeting one Sunday at both Cherry Glade and Oak Dale and the following Sunday all met at Maple Glen.

### **Future Leadership**

The congregation continues its efforts to further define its future as it seeks a lead pastor. On April 30, 2020, Barry Maust resigned his role as Lead Pastor. Titus Beitzel then assumed the role as Interim Lead Pastor. Recently Titus informed the congregation of his intent to step down in this role effective January 1, 2023.

### **CMC**

Cherry Glade continues as an active member of CMC, which is composed of over 110 congregations with 13,000 members. The second annual conference of CMC was held at Maple Glen in 1912. Now, after a hundred and ten years, the churches will again host conference this July 22-25 at the Fair Grounds in McHenry, following 13 such gatherings in the Casselman Valley.

### **The Book**

Over four hundred and fifty years ago, Menno Simons read the Word which took him on a new personal spiritual pilgrimage. At one point he declared, "O dear Lord, I did not know myself until I viewed myself in Thy Word." John Wesley expressed the need for the Word when he cried, "I want to know one thing - the Way to heaven; how to land safe on that happy shore. God Himself has condescended to teach the Way; for this very end He came from heav-

Commerce, the County Economic Development Corporation and more. Living near prospering Deep Creek Lake provides opportunity to engage in construction and other entrepreneurial enterprises.

Members are also employed in jobs in both public and private sectors, such as public school teachers and supporting staff, hospitals and nursing facilities.

Goodwill Retirement Community serves those who need assistance, whether living in cottages, independent living or nursing home. Currently Goodwill serves 183 residents with 210 employees.

In early years, farming, especially dairy, provided livelihood for many families. Now only a few dairy families remain as many moved to other jobs and enterprises.

The church sponsors two softball teams in the Grantsville Men's Christian Softball League. There are also basketball teams and women's volleyball.

Foster care and adoption have become a reality for some.

### **Membership**

Over the years, the actual number of church member/attendees became increasingly skewed as members left Cherry Glade without officially withdrawing membership. In recent years, some members began attending elsewhere while new members were added both from within and outside the congregation.

### **Affiliation With Conference**

In 1912 Cherry Glade, along with Maple Glen and Oak Dale, affiliated with the newly formed Conservative Amish Mennonite Conference. Two years earlier, in 1910, some of the leaders had met to plan for the future, stating simply, "In accordance with an announcement and invitation to the ministers of the Conservative Amish Mennonite Churches a number of ministers, brethren and sisters assembled themselves together to counsel with each other for the welfare of the church and the building and extension of the work of the Lord."

The second meeting of the Conference was held at Maple Glen in 1912. At that time, concerns were expressed for orphans. In 1913, Noah Brenneman and his wife, near Bittering, took orphans into their own home. By 1916 the Amish Mennonite Children's Home had been constructed, near Grantsville, which now is the Goodwill Retirement Community. The children's orphanage was said to have been the first social service of its kind in Garrett County. In 1954, the Conference dropped "Amish" from its name as it then became the Conservative Mennonite Conference.

## **Anabaptist Roots**

The Conservative Mennonite Conference was rooted in many of the beliefs and practices of the Anabaptists which formed during the early years of the 16th century Protestant reformation, in Switzerland. The Anabaptists broke from the traditional state church claiming the Bible as the only guide for faith and life. Central to the Anabaptists belief was, a total commitment to discipleship, the church as the body of believers, and the ethic of love and non-resistance. A motto of one of the early followers was, "No one can truly know Christ except they follow Him in life." (Hans Denk)

They believed, for example, that the Bible taught that only "believers" should be baptized, clearly going against the teaching of the state church, which practiced infant baptism. How could infants, after all, make a choice to be "believers?"

On the evening of January 21, 1525, a small group in Zurich, Switzerland, met for Bible study, prayer, and discernment as to their next steps. Before the evening was over, they arose from their knees and baptized each other. For this practice they became known as Anabaptists (baptized again).

Being baptized as an adult believer, however, was not the only issue; rather it had to do with being faithful to the teachings of the Bible. Thus, believers baptism became a symbol of defiance against the state church and its authority.

ship breakfast is enjoyed by all. Coffee cups are a regular sight as people move from place to place.

Children's church occurring twice monthly has become an important part of the Sunday experience for children.

Since the mid 1960s, VBS was held each summer for children from both the church and community.

Since the mid 1990s, Small Groups were formed so that members can choose to be a part of a more closely knit setting.

The church enjoys an active youth and Junior youth group, consisting of around 35 young people.

## **Affiliations**

Affiliation with Rosedale Bible College provides opportunity for many youth to engage in serious Bible study. Likewise, affiliation with Rosedale Missions, now Rosedale International, provides opportunity to engage in missions abroad. Participation with Everence provides some financial and consulting support for the congregation. The church also participates with Mennonite World Conference thru CMC. Some of the youth enjoyed participation in the Reach program.

Today, Cherry Glade members are highly involved in the life of the local community, the county and beyond.

Members are operating successful businesses and corporations which also employ many congregational members. Members serve on the Chamber of



### **Helping Hands**

Helping Hands beginning as the "Sewing" continues to serve as they make comforters, school kits, hygiene kits, layette bundles, and refugee children care packs.

### **Drama**

"Behold The King", a drama written by one of our members, Esther Yoder, has touched the lives of many as it is presented every other year at Easter. The church auditorium is usually filled for three consecutive evening presentations.

### **Child Care**

In 1989, a Child Care program was started in the Fellowship Hall, as an outreach effort. Approximately 35 children were enrolled. The program mission was to operate a holistic child care program to support each child to develop mentally, socially, emotionally, spiritually and physically to his/her fullest potential, in a Christ-centered atmosphere. The program was discontinued in 1998.

Today, church services continue as they have in the past with Sunday School from 9:30-10:30; Praise and Worship 10:30-11:00; Preaching 11:00; and the Service ending with a song.

Praise and worship teams now lead in a time of music prior to preaching. What was once acapella singing is now accompanied by musical instruments.

On the first Sunday of each month, a light fellow-

Just over two years following the January 21 evening in Zurich, when Felix Manz was baptized, he was drowned in the Lamat River for this act.

In the following years, it is estimated that more than 5,000 Anabaptists died as martyrs for their faith. Many were tortured and put to death by drowning, beheading or burning at the stake.

Menno Simons was one of the Anabaptist leaders from the Netherlands. As a priest, he began to search the Scriptures in earnest and decided that he needed to obey God. His motto became "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid which is Jesus Christ." (I Cor. 3:11 KJV)

Today the name Mennonite can be traced to Menno Simons while the name Amish is traced to Jakob Amman, a later leader in the movement for one of the Anabaptist groups. While neither of these men came to America, their influence spread through those who immigrated, their faith tested, but intact.

As a peace-seeking people, the first Mennonites arrived in America in the mid 1600s with the first permanent settlement being in Germantown, Pennsylvania in 1683. Waves of new immigrants continued to arrive over the years. Migrations to the west, north and south continued.

### **Early Cherry Glade Years**

Building plans for the old Cherry Glade church house called for very simple construction. The building measured 24'x 40' and cost a total of \$300. Two pot-bellied stoves were used for heating, with kerosene lamps hanging from the ceiling providing lighting, which were rarely used.

The small, simple Cherry Glade church house helped to create an atmosphere of closeness. The pulpit had two benches on each side and was only twenty-five feet from the last bench at the rear of the build-



and interactive with each other and guests. The function category is further divided into worship experience, shepherding, care, youth ministry, children's ministry, discipleship and outreach.

Supporting these categories are teams and various committees that are doing the work and ministry of the church. These teams and ministries work with the pastor/elder who has been assigned to their area of oversight to help cast vision, fill vacant positions on the teams, coordinate efforts with other teams, vet teaching and curriculum to assure biblical context, give direction to the teams and answer questions.

The Leadership team meets regularly to process any concerns and give direction in a timely manner, currently meeting twice monthly.

After more than 25 years of operating under the prior structure, the new structure was approved by the congregation by a nearly unanimous vote.

### **Over The Years**

#### **Alms Fund**

The Alms Fund began years ago as a means to help needy church members and continues by receiving offerings on Communion Sunday.

#### **Outreach**

Over the years, the church was involved in various outreach efforts including Mennonite Disaster Service and Mennonite Central Committee. During the summer months, Sunday morning services were conducted at the New Germany State Park.

## **Church Membership**

As of 2022, church membership stands at around 415. While church growth continues, the church experiences both inflow and outflow of members/attendees. The experiencing of COVID-19 in the early spring of 2020 and its continuation for the next year plus had its impact on the congregation.

For a period of time, in-person church services were discontinued and live-streaming of services was put in place. As in-person services resumed, attendance was somewhat sporadic. The church practiced what was mandated by the State of MD. Later, use of masks became optional.

Technology had its own challenges in the reality of not having face-to face interaction. Through all of this, the church did not experience major conflict.

## **Current Organizational Structure - 2021**

In 2021, the church again underwent changes in the organizational structure. The church is now led by the Church Leadership Team made up of the ordained and licensed pastors, seven Elders who are affirmed by the congregation and a Worship leader affirmed by the congregation. The lead Pastor chairs the Leadership Team. Team members are assigned one or more areas of ministry oversight based on their gifting and interest.

The areas of ministry oversight are divided into three main categories: operations, such as finance and facilities; function, spiritual function and mission;

ing. In a sense, the congregation seemed more like a large family, warm, informal and caring. Comfortable seating capacity was limited to around 100.

Seven Sunday School classes for adult men, women, and youth were held Sunday in the 24x30' open space, at times divided by several curtains. So if you didn't like what was happening in your class you could listen to another.

Preaching was in both English and German. Singing was acapella, using the Sammlung von Schönen Lieder (Collection of Beautiful Hymns) song book, later followed by the church hymnal in 1951. Much of the singing early on was in unison and later in four part.

By the early 1960s, the church house could no longer accommodate all of its members. By 1965, the

new Cherry Glade church house was built on top of Negro Mountain, the present location, at a cost of \$32,482. This new site provided a centralized

location for families on both the east and west sides of Negro Mountain.

The last regular service was held in the old Cherry Glade church house on August 29, 1965, and



the new church house was dedicated the following Sunday, September 5, 1965. With the completion of the new church house, Sunday morning services were held each Sunday. The pastoral team continued to be shared with Maple Glen and Oak Dale.

On April 8, 1966, Cherry Glade was organized as a separate congregation with a charter membership of 86. On September 15, 1968, the church ordained Elmer H. Maust as bishop. From 1965 to present, there were 15 licensed/ordained or commissioned pastors and deacons, who ministered at Cherry Glade. Lead pastors included Elmer H. Maust, Oren Bender, Barry Maust and Titus Beitzel, as Interim Lead Pastor. Licensing and ordination included the following in sequence from the time period of 1965 to the present.

- Ivan J Miller, Bishop, ordained June 19, 1938, and continued to serve as bishop until 1968.
- Simon Beachy, Deacon, ordained 1946.
- Elmer H. Maust, Bishop, ordained 1958.
- Kenneth Yoder ordained in 1962.
- Paul H. Yoder commissioned as Minister of Evangelism.
- Alva Maust ordained July 2, 1967. Cherry Glade and Dry Run.
- Oren Bender ordained May 6, 1973.
- Raymond Bender, Deacon, ordained in 1975.
- Herman Yoder, Assistant Deacon, ordained, 1984. Became Deacon when Raymond retired.

As renovations progressed, cost escalated for an additional \$450,000. Half for a total cost of \$1,150,000, is covered by Calvary.

### **Calvary**

The idea for the school was actually birthed when Erin Younkin had operated a school in 2020, in a private home. Soon there was evidence of considerable interest in having expanded Christian education opportunities.

The start of the school was not unlike in 1913, when Noah Brennehan and wife, housed over 20 children in their own home, prior to the construction of the orphanage next to Maple Glen.

The school provides options to public schools and home-schooling. The school will have classes for children from pre-K through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Enrollment for 2021-2022 stood at 49, while enrollment for 2022-2023 is projected at 100 which is near the capacity of the newly renovated classrooms.

Financing for the school will come from tuition as both Calvary and Cherry Glade share in projected costs and revenue sharing. Calvary provides the legal and accreditation umbrella for the school.

The school mission statement is simply "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6)

The future will tell how the school was impacted by the church or, on the other hand, how the church was impacted by the school.

### **Kitchen and Fellowship Hall**

By 2017, a new kitchen was constructed, which greatly enhanced the ability to serve meals at funerals and other events. The new kitchen and remodeling of the Fellowship Hall at that time was completed with a final cost of \$267,690.87.

### **Senior Meals**

The new kitchen also provided the opportunity for serving monthly meals for seniors as an outreach and service to both members and the community. The senior meals started in 2017 by Barry and Carol Maust, and continues to date.

### **Calvary Christian Academy (Garrett County Campus)**

In 2021, Cherry Glade entered into an arrangement with Calvary Christian Academy, headquartered in Allegany County, to open a campus in Garrett County, to be operated in the Cherry Glade facility.

The new 2008 church sanctuary contained balconies on three sides which could be renovated to accommodate classrooms. Plans and drawings were presented to the congregation with a cost estimate of \$700,000. The congregation voted to move forward with the project provided that 80% of the projected costs are either in hand or pledged.

- James Brenneman, Associate pastor, ordained 1984; resigned in 1998.
  - Anthony Lehman commissioned as Youth Pastor, 1997.
  - Barry Maust licensed on April 30, 2000; ordained on Feb. 10 2002. Retired as Lead Pastor June 30, 2020.
  - Titus Beitzel licensed on April 30, 2000; ordained on Feb 10, 2002. Served as Interim Lead Pastor after Barry Maust retired. Planning to step down Jan 1, 2023.
  - Danny Tice licensed April 30, 2000; ordained on Feb. 10, 2002.
  - Robert Stark licensed May 2, 2021.
- 
- John Mishler was overseer at Cherry Glade from 2002 to 2008.
  - Jim Brubaker served as overseer at Cherry Glade for a few years.
  - Mel Shetler was overseer at Cherry Glade from 2014 until his resignation in early 2022.
  - It is anticipated that a new overseer will be installed by fall of this year.



### **Dry Run**

In 1972, Cherry Glade was asked by the Allegheny Conference to assist in the work with the Dry Run Church. Within a few years, a number of families left Cherry Glade and began attending at Dry Run, where Alva Maust then served as lead pastor. Later, the Dry Run Congregation withdrew its affiliation from the Conservative Mennonite Conference.

### **Growth**

Steady growth continued at Cherry Glade, although at one time, the youth group numbered only five. With the relatively high number of young families, the youth group grew to nearly forty within ten years. Growth was also occurring as families from other churches transferred membership to Cherry Glade.

### **Auditorium Expansion and Fellowship Hall**

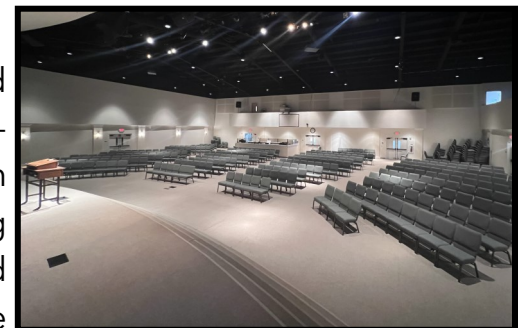
Within twelve years the church house was once again unable to accommodate all of its members. In 1978, the church house was enlarged by extending the auditorium and adding a Fellowship Hall, at a cost of \$160,000.

### **New Addition**

Preliminary plans were reviewed with a consultant firm to provide drawings and cost estimates. It was decided that the new addition should be a stand alone facility, however, connecting with the existing facility. Cost estimate of nearly 2.2 million for the new addition was projected.

The church was canvassed for support of this major project. A decision was made that 80% of the funds for construction costs would need to be in hand or pledged within a certain time frame to move forward.

With pledged funding in place, construction began. In 2008, the building was completed and the dedication service was held on Nov. 16, 2008. Membership as of December 31, 2008 was 356.



also established to assist in matching gifts with service opportunities.

The Spiritual Life and Worship Commission was headed by the pastors and three elders. The three elder's primary responsibilities included Small Groups, Elder/Deacon and one as an Elder-at-Large. The board at this time, appointed a church secretary.

The church board, lead by a chairman who also served as the congregational chairman, became a vital function of church operation and decision making. While pastors served on the church board, they also met separately. The pastors and elders were the leaders responsible for the spiritual welfare of the congregation.

During this period, the congregation also worked through further definition of congregational life. Statements were drafted and adopted which included Declaration of Beliefs, Congregation Covenant, and Some Guidelines for Congregational Life.

During the late 1990s and early 2000s, membership continued to grow. By 2005, space was again becoming an issue. This, of course, again raised the question of what is next? The congregation established a facility planning committee in 2005 to begin planning for possible expansion.

## **Centennial Celebration**

In 1981, the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Cherry Glade Church was observed with an outdoor morning worship service at the old Church house site. Several German songs were sung, "O Gott Vater, Vir Loben Dich" (Our Father God, Thy Name We Praise), and "Gott Ist Die Liebe" (For God So Loved Us), and the hymn, "O God Our Help In Ages Past." In the afternoon the addition to the new Cherry Glade church house was dedicated The Cherry Glade Men's Chorus provided special singing. The membership then stood at 160.

## **Music**

The church enjoyed four part acapella hymn singing as a regular part of the church service. At first, the Church Hymnal was used, followed later with The Mennonite Hymnal. A song leader led the music.

## **Men's Chorus**

Soon after 1965, a men's chorus was started. The chorus consisted of thirty-four singers, drawing some of its members from other congregations. The chorus recorded two albums: "In The Garden" in 1970 and "We'll All Be There" several years later. The chorus gave programs at many local events and travelled by bus out-of-state, including Ohio and Michigan.

### **Youth Chorus**

During this period there was also an active youth chorus, consisting of over thirty singers. The chorus travelled by bus to give programs in Ohio, Delaware, Belleville and Lancaster, Pa. Most of the singing was acapella, although instrumental accompaniment was used for several numbers.

### **Change**

Throughout these years, the congregation experienced significant change in some of its practices. Some regulations for membership were relaxed which permitted greater individual freedom.

Changes also occurred as members increasingly moved from family farms to become day laborers and to enter professional occupations. More of the youth, and older members as well, began attending colleges or other formal training.

During these years, the organizational structure of the church had remained basically unchanged. The pastoral team composed of pastor(s) and deacon(s), Sunday School superintendent, song leader, Mission Board, trustees, ushers, Mennonite Disaster Service, and Helping Hands, comprised most of the major functions within the church.

Most of the activities and the decision-making revolved around the pastoral team, which found it increasingly difficult to keep pace with all of its responsibilities to meet the church's needs. The pastors were not financially supported by the congregation

except through quarterly offerings, which were divided among the team.

In 1991, at the recommendation of the pastoral team, Long Range Planning and Finance Committees were established to plan for future needs. The Long Range Planning Committee recommended that a church board be established, consisting of the pastoral team and other positions. The recommendation was adopted in January 1993.

The Long Range Planning Committee sought to propose a structure that would lighten the burden of the pastors while harnessing more of the laity in church administration. The example in Act 6 supported the idea that the pastors pay greater attention to spiritual welfare than "waiting on tables." Additionally, some church leaders may be especially gifted in "preaching" but less so in "administration".

### **New Organizational Structure - 1994**

By January 1994, the new organizational structure had been presented to the congregation and accepted. The new structure created five commissions: Spiritual Life and Worship; Fellowship and Service; Nurture and Education; Mission and Outreach; and Finance and Property.

Each of these commissions had a chair who served on the Church Board. The Commissions had responsibility to coordinate and promote goals and activities of numerous committees within each commission. A spiritual Gifts and Service Committee was