

Winter 2014

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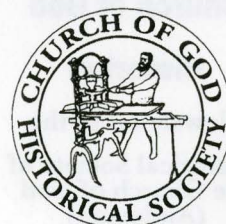
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**Newsletter of the
Historical Society of
the Church of God
(Anderson)**

The Church of God Historian



"Molding Thousands for the Gospel," by David Neidert, editor

Mary Cole is the clergywoman behind this issue. In reading previous *Historians* and in conversing with Dale Stultz, the Society's Vice President about new work, it is apparent many stories are still untold about clergywomen and the role they have played in molding thousands of lives for the gospel.

A number of histories exist related to those women who impacted the Church of God, like Allie Fisher, Mother Sarah Smith, and Mary Cole. (See Suzie Stanley's excellent chapter in *Called to Minister*). These pioneer evangelists, reflecting on the holiness message they felt compelled to preach, share they experienced a wide range of acceptance, but also "considerable opposition" and "out right confrontation."¹

These stories, captured in a number of Gospel Trumpet articles to individual books, are merely the surface

of a deeper Church of God heritage related to clergywomen. My own life was shaped by one of these lesser known stories housed in the person of Rev. Pauline Maxwell. "Aunt Polly," as she was known, served the Alliance First Church of God from 1974-1983. Her summons one night during a revival at my Greensburg, OH congregation lead me to a Church of God university when a more local school had already been chosen for my higher education. She also provided me early a chance to experience ministry by leading a weekend youth retreat in the basement of her congregation. Aunt Polly is representative of the vital role clergywomen have had on

many young (and old) in the Church of God.

Unfortunately, we have not adequately recognized clergywomen who gave lifetimes for the sake of the Gospel. We have missed acknowledging and heralding women God has called to ministry.

This issue is meant to help us proclaim but also challenge. Jason Varner, a doctoral student long interested in what we have left unsaid, challenges us to look closely at what we have written, the historical documents of our past. He wonders, "Is our women in ministry message as clear as we have believed?" Dr. Juanita Leonard and others, however, pen articles about what we have done and draw our attention to stories not widely known concerning women in ministry.



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Church of God Historian

Newsletter of the
Historical Society of
the Church of God
(Anderson)

Vol 14 No 2
Winter 2014

This newsletter is published three times a year: Fall; Winter; and Spring. It is published by the Society on behalf of its members. Printed in Anderson, Indiana.

The Historical Society Purpose

The Historical Society of the Church of God (Anderson) exists to encourage the collection and preservation of artifacts and documents relating to the history of the Church of God; to encourage historical research and the writing concerning Church of God history; and to provide a forum for like-minded people interested in participating in and furthering the study of Church of God history.

Uncovering the Narrative *By Jason Varner*

Editor's Note: This article by Jason Varner asks an important question, "What do our documents say about women in ministry in the Church of God?" Varner wonders if there ever was a Golden Age with our founders from which we have fallen away (declension narrative) related to women in ministry. His challenge is to examine all the records to see if lessons and opportunities might be uncovered.

In 1989, Dr. Cheryl Sanders published an article entitled "Ethics of Holiness and Unity in the Church of God." In this important piece, Sanders compellingly argued that in order for the Church of God to achieve the holiness it preached, more attention needed to be paid to ethics—and in particular issues involving "racial and sexual division."¹ While her article has already generated a great deal of conversation related to the topic of women in ministry, Sanders raises historiographical questions that remain to be addressed.

Much of the gravity and momentum of Dr. Sanders' argument seems to derive from a historiographical narrative that bemoans the loss of an early Church of God egalitarianism that rejected "sexual subordination" and "the racist and sexist biases of American culture."² This narrative of egalitarian declension suggests that after an initial period of promise for women in ministry, their influence waned and their roles were

restricted as the Church became more organized in the early decades of the twentieth-century.³ While this declension narrative has served to draw attention to very real and significant problems facing women in today's church, the archival evidence paints a much less optimistic picture of egalitarianism in the early years of the movement.

Primary source materials suggest that, while clergywomen enjoyed opportunities for leadership in the church that outpaced opportunities available to them in wider society, women in the Church of God struggled to experience full equality from the very beginnings of the movement. The title of D.S. Warner's *Gospel Trumpet* article, "Woman's Freedom in Christ: To Pray and Prophecy in Public Worship" suggests an egalitarianism uncommon to the eighteenth-century.⁴ A closer look at Warner's argument, however, reveals a more complex—and more problematic—view on women in ministry. Drawing on 1 Corinthians 14, Warner is careful to divide the leadership of women in the church into two categories. The first category, which Warner labels 'prophesying', involves the ministry of the Holy Spirit in worship. The second category for Warner, "speaking in the church," involves the organiza-

tion and operation—the "business"—of the church.⁵ Warner's argument, then, is that a woman is encouraged to speak without restriction in the worship service, but that she ought to remain silent so as to avoid "overstepping woman's subordination by making herself too free, and conspicuous in business and ruling affairs in the Church."⁶ A woman, as the "weaker vessel" is consequently "forbidden" to speak "outside the several parts of spiritual worship to God" on matters that are "wholly of an intellectual, governmental, and business character."⁷

A 1918 article by the editor of the *Gospel Trumpet* demonstrates a shift to a more open stance on women in ministry and leadership, but it retains some of the subordination rhetoric employed thirty years earlier by Warner. F.G. Smith, in answering questions posed to the *GT* by two unnamed Baptist ministers, argues that women have the same rights as men do—borrowing from Warner's categories—both "prophesy" and "speak in the church."⁸ In respect to life within the family, however, Smith interprets 1 Timothy 2 as "forbid[ing] a woman to make herself the ruler or teacher of her husband, and enjoins her to keep her proper place in the family."⁹

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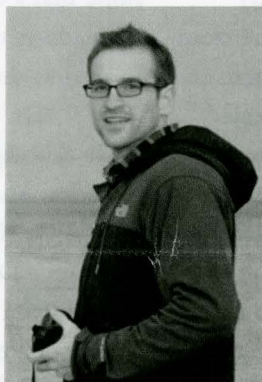
Uncovering the Narrative.. continued

Expectations for female ministers navigating situations within which the family and the church would inevitably intersect remains unclear in Smith's response. What is clear is that while Smith's position in 1918 relaxed restrictions on women operating in organizational leadership, his subsequent reinforcement of traditional family roles in the same article served to discourage equal access—carte blanche—to women experiencing a call to church leadership.

Apart from questions of biblical interpretation, early attempts to express and promote Church of God identity through resolutions and lists of distinctives raises questions concerning the egalitarian declension narrative. The Carson City Resolutions, for example, raise the wider issue of a clergy whose authority is derived from charismatic gifting—as opposed to ecclesiastical hierarchy—but the subject of women in ministry is never mentioned.¹⁰ Perhaps more incredible is that in a list of twenty-five Church of God distinctives offered by A.T. Rowe in 1898, the fact that women are to have equal partnership in the dissemination of the gospel comes in at number 20—just after prohibitions on the use of

tobacco, tea and coffee, and the wearing of jewelry.¹¹

This article by no means purports to be a comprehensive review of the primary literature. Much work remains to be done in tracking and documenting the historical narrative of women in the Church of God from the very beginnings of the movement to today. But perhaps in the



meantime, this brief study might help to spark ideas on how a new reading of Church of God history might generate fresh approaches to the problem at hand: empowering emerging generations of women to preach

the good news of the Kingdom of God.

Jason Varner is currently working on his PhD at the University of St. Andrews (Scotland). He received his MTS (Anderson University School of Theology) and MLitt, University of St Andrews.

¹ Published in Juanita Leonard, *Called to Minister, Empowered to Serve: women in ministry and missions in the Church of God reformation movement*. (Anderson: Warner Press, 1989), 131.

² Ibid., 143.

³ While it is never comprehensively described as such, this declension narrative is tacitly present—to varying degrees—

in a wide sampling of Church of God secondary literature. See Leonard, *Called to Minister*, 131; and 175; Merle D. Strege, *I Saw the Church: the Life of the Church of God Told Theologically*. (Anderson: Warner Press, 2002), 325; and Dr. MaryAnn Hawkins 2013 companion curriculum to *Called to Minister*, which argues that: “the Church of God has affirmed women in ministry since the very beginning of the Movement.” <http://www.anderson.edu/sites/default/files/migrate/sot/wim/called-to-minister.pdf>, 22.

⁴ Daniel S. Warner, “Women’s Freedom in Christ: To Pray and Prophesy in Public Worship.” *The Gospel Trumpet*. 9:14, (October 1, 1887): 1.

⁵ Ibid., 1.

⁶ Ibid., 1.

⁷ Ibid., 1.

⁸ “If one is silenced, so is the other.” F.G. Smith, “Questions Answered.” *The Gospel Trumpet*. 38:17, (April 25, 1918): 6.

⁹ Ibid., 6.

¹⁰ John W.V. Smith and Merle D. Strege, *The Quest for Holiness and Unity*. 2nd Edition. (Anderson: Warner Press, 2009), 39.

¹¹ A.T. Rowe, “What We Believe,” *The Gospel Trumpet*. (Jan 6, 1898): 3.

For more information on Jason: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/history/postgrad/postgraduates/jasonvarner.html>

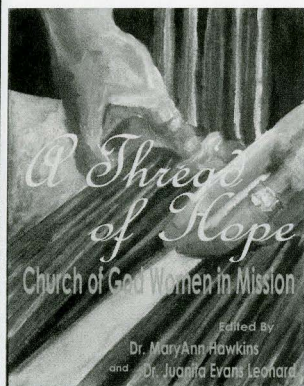
Continued from the Front Page:

This issue is offered as an encouragement, a reminder of what has been done, and a challenge to make sure we herald widely the Church of God history concerning women in ministry.

¹ MaryAnn Hawkins ed., *Called to Minister: Empowered to Serve*, (Anderson, Indiana: Warner Press, 2013), 76-77.

For more information and resources on Women in Ministry, visit:

Women in Ministry Qara, resources and articles. <http://www.anderson.edu/sot/wim/resources.html>



A Thread of Hope: Church of God Women in Mission (edited by MaryAnn Hawkins and Juanita Evans Leonard) is composed of "fascinating biographies" of female missionaries of the Church of God across the decades. The thread that holds them together is HOPE, and hope is what they passed on to generations of people across the continents.

A Thread of Hope (Published by AU Press: 2009) may be purchased for \$13.99. It may be purchased through Warner Press, Christian Women Connection or the AU Bookstore.

All proceeds are added to an endowment to scholarship seminary women preparing for cross-cultural ministry.

Looking in the Rear View Mirror: A Pivotal Moment for Women in Ministry and the Church of God *by Dr. Juanita Leonard*

Note: This article represents a first hand account from Dr. Leonard, who participated in this Consultation. It reminds us that it took over 110 years from the establishment of the Church of God to recognize clergywomen, their role, and their calling for ministry.

Early in 1980 then Dean of Anderson University School of Theology, Dr. Jerry C. Grubbs, introduced the topic "Women in Ministry" in the School of Theology quarterly journal.¹ He was joined by significant church leadership voices like D. Elton Trueblood, Harold Phillips, Lillie S. McCutcheon, Jan Erickson-Pearson, Helen Newell, and Marilyn K. Henry, who spoke with candor and clarity about the issue: *Why were women not more visible in Church of God pulpits and in all the ministries of the church?*

Over the years since the issue was raised, the discussion had at times been vigorous. However, at other times it was a dearth. Some writers had focused on the relationship of the secular feminist movement and its relationship to women clergy in the Church of God, while others had argued that the "feminist Movement" served

to challenge the Church of God at its biblical theological roots.

Finally, from June 15-17, 1989, The School of Theology sponsored the First National Consultation on Women in Ministry and Missions in the 110 year history of the Reformation. One hundred and sixty women and men came from Canada, England, Japan, and the United States to celebrate, explore, and connect with those who shared the women in ministry vision. The vision was of women proclaiming Christ to take "the whole Gospel to the whole world." The Consultation was envisaged as a continuation of the dialogue begun a decade earlier.

Within the previous 50 years the Church of God had drifted away from convictions held and lived out by the first generation church leaders who assumed women's participation in ministry. "Called To Minister—Empowered To Serve" was chosen as the Consultation foci by ten women clergy. These ten women represented the inclusiveness of the church. They were women who had been nurtured in the Reformation truths and

those who came into "the light" by the power of the Holy Spirit. Over the years these women had raised the questions concerning the lack of the utilization of the giftedness of women by the institutional church. Together they birthed and shaped the Consultation in prayerful hope that a correction could be made as the church looked to the 21st century.

Dr. Marie Strong, Bible & Religion Professor Emerita, Anderson University; and Dr. Willie T. Barrow, Executive Director of Operation PUSH and Associate Pastor of Vernon Park Church of God, Chicago, Illinois, passionately and poignantly challenged the participants to look at the nature of the CALL to ministry and who had empowered them in the Call. They reminded the church that the message of the Church of God, from its inception, had interpreted "the CALL" as that coming from God and the Holy Spirit empowering "whosoever" without regard

Continued on page 5

to human differences of gender, race, class, and physical condition. The beginning years of the Church of God practiced the "whosoever." A specific workshop on the topic, "What the Bible Says About Women in Ministry," was led by Dr. Sharon Clark Pearson, a School of Theology graduate and Professor of New Testament. Pearson pointed out the tension between the "eschatological vision of the prophet Joel as quoted on the day of Pentecost (Acts) and statements based on propriety and convention."²



Juanita Leonard

Pearson placed the arguments of hierarchy and dominance/subordination of women parallel to the ministry of Jesus with stories which demonstrated a revolution in attitudes and practice in his ministry as well as by the participation of women in the early church. Pearson showed that women were a part of Jesus' followers, which scholar Joachim Jeremias states was "an unprecedented happening in history of that time."³

Dr. Verda Beach, Associate Pastor, Emerald Avenue Church of God, Chicago; Rev. Alice Dise, Associate, Vernon Park church of God, Chicago; and Dr. Susie Stanley, Professor of Church History, Western Evangelical Seminary, and ecumenical min-

ister of the Church of God, Portland, Oregon, led the conference in an understanding of the "History of the Empowerment of Women Over the Past Century." These workshops, along with those given on "The Global Vision of Women," led by Dr. Ann Smith, retired missionary from Japan, enabled participants to be renewed in the foundational thought and practice held by Church of God concerning clergywomen.

The reality of being a woman in ministry and the confrontations with people who do not envision Scripture concerning the place of women in ministry as the Church of God

does, had been painful. The consultation spoke to and for women who had been and are being persecuted for their call to minister. Dr. Verda Beach led a panel composed of Dr. Addie Wyatt, Rev. Billie Jenkins, and Dr. Diane Swoope, in a time of discussion and prayer on what and how women carry on the task God had called them to in the midst of such adversity.

Workshops also dealt with the practical issues of ministry focused on the minister's spirituality, giftedness, and placement; continued preparation following the call on one's life, and information on how the Church of God functions as an institution. All of these workshops and discussions were bathed in praise and prayer, a unifying element of the Consultation. This

A Pivotal Moment Continued

endeavor came to a conclusion with an agape meal led by Rev. Vivian Moore of St. Louis and Rev. Cynthia Woods of Washington, D.C.

The Consultation made several recommendations that were intended to be a basis for continuing the women in ministry dialogue. The recommendations were: yearly conferences to be held at the International Convention of the Church of God; a newsletter linking women in ministry and missions to be published three times a year; and an ongoing Consultation every three years.

The Consultation took one additional step to make the contents of this event widespread by producing the book *Called to Minister... Empowered To Serve* (1989). The manuscript had been written by Church of God women on the various issues confronting the question of women in ministry. The resource was to serve the church as it looked to the ongoing preparation of women in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The proceeds from the publication went toward a scholarship in the School of Theology for women.

Rev. Juanita Evans Leonard Ph.D., is Professor Emerita Christian Mission, Anderson University School of Theology

¹ Jerry C. Grubbs, "Women in Ministry: An Introduction," *Centering on Ministry*, Winter, Vol.5, No.2. Anderson University School of Theology, Anderson, IN. 1980.

² Sharon Pearson, "Biblical Precedents for Women in Ministry," *Called to Minister: Empowered to Serve*, Juanita Evans Leonard, editor. Anderson, IN: Warner Press, Inc. 1989. 14.

³ Ibid. 15

Loving God fills a Lifetime: Sister Pansy Brown *by Dr. Aleza Beverly*



Dr. Pansy Brown was a Christian educator, with a personal, local, national, and international passion for “studying to show thyself approved.”

At the turn of the century in 1901, Pansy Melvina (Major) Brown was born to William M. and Annie Major. Her mother, a school teacher and Church of God pastor-evangelist, instilled in her a love for learning and a love for Christ. With excellent academic preparation, she attended the prestigious Dunbar High School in Washington D.C. “where ‘the brightest and the best’ from African American families went to high school.”¹ She graduated with honors in 1924 and went on to earn a two year certification. Returning to college often throughout her life, she fulfilled a lifelong aspiration and graduated in 1969 with a Bachelor of Science degree in elementary education.²

Sister Pansy’s quest for formal education seemed to be succeeded only by her love of God, for Christian education and her family. She and her husband, Theodore J. Brown, were blessed with three children, Patricia Carrothers, Delores Gidney, and Theodore Brown (deceased). In a conversation with Delores, she reflected on being the middle child that needed a little “extra prayer” and was thankful, even as a teenager, to spend morning prayer time with her mom. “Her prayer life and her thirst for learning were examples that helped me so much in my life.”³ While being mother was Sister Pansy’s priority, Delores recalled the many roles her mother held through the years at her church in Washington D.C. and the influence she had on others.

Rev. Dr. Cheryl Sanders, Pastor

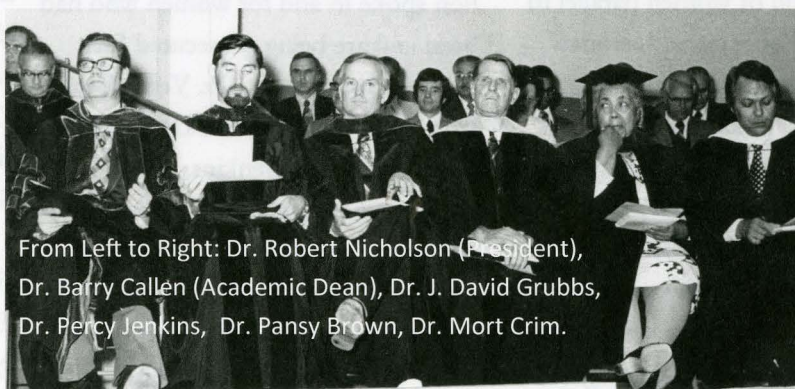
of the Third Street Church of God, acknowledged the impact Sister Pansy had on her life. “Because of her witness and work, I always grew up knowing women in ministry. Because of her influence, example and encouragement, I never questioned the call of women to serve the church as preachers and pastors,” recalls Sanders.⁴ Under the leadership of Dr. Samuel Hines, Sister Pansy was appointed Minister of Christian Education. Appropriately named in her honor, the ‘Pansy M. Brown Educational Annex at Third Street Church of God was recently renovated and expanded into a new educational and administrative complex featuring the Pansy M. Brown Memorial Library.⁵

Christian education was not embraced by everyone in the 1950s. Some criticized it and felt “ministers were expected to become rooted and grounded in the Lord and allow the Holy Spirit to pro-

Sister Brown, “...Dr. Brown will be forever remembered as the co-founder and prime mover of the In-Service Training Institute. This annual training institute for church school teachers, lay leaders, students of the Bible, associate ministers and pastors has a history and growing legacy of its own...Dr. Brown’s creative ministry and voiced concern for the spiritual growth and authentic maturation of the whole person has distinguished her as one of the church’s great leaders.”⁷

Early in her life, Sister Pansy dreamed of being a missionary to some island. In 1970 her dream became reality when she and her husband served at the Church of Bodden Town, and Sister Pansy taught at Triple C School in the Cayman Islands.⁸

Her ministry has been acknowledged from time to time, but a treasured honor took place in June 1974. Sister Pansy was the first African American woman to be conferred an honorary doctorate by Anderson College.⁹ Patricia,



From Left to Right: Dr. Robert Nicholson (President), Dr. Barry Callen (Academic Dean), Dr. J. David Grubbs, Dr. Percy Jenkins, Dr. Pansy Brown, Dr. Mort Crim.

vide the needed education.”⁶ Too passionate to allow such thinking to discourage her, Sister Pansy Brown was joined by Sister Josie Grier Rogers in the founding of the In-Service Training Institution (ISTI) in 1957. Sister Pansy would serve ISTI over the years as director, treasurer and staff instructor. Robert Dulin says of

her eldest child, recalled how proud the entire family was of Dr. Brown. They were especially thankful for the impression it made on their children and others that hard work, lifelong learning, aspiring for excellence, and loving God are keys to a fulfilling life.

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Finding Fisher *by Dale Stultz with David Neidert*

Historians and archaeologists alike never know where the next discovery might be located. Take for instance King Richard III who was recently found under the Leicester Car Park...a parking lot. The University of Leicester (England) on the trail of the despoised monarch, did just that in September 2012. Such is the case with dozens of discoveries, both recent and long past.

Dale Stultz made such a discovery concerning JC Fisher and his whereabouts in LaGrange, Indiana. While combing the internet for information about Fisher, Stultz came upon a video link. The video link, from a LaGrange Indiana newspaper, related the story of a person working with collapsed Civil War burial markers in the local cemetery. The video panned from the old, worn out grave marker slowly up to the new headstone placed by the veterans' auxiliary from the area. There, to Stultz'

surprise, was the headstone of JC Fisher.

The marker tells us that Fisher was a member of the Michigan A Company, 18th Infantry. Following those records tell us he en-

more details, watch the upcoming Spring Issue of the Historian).

Stultz made an immediate contact with Jean McKibben, who is overseeing the grave marker restoration

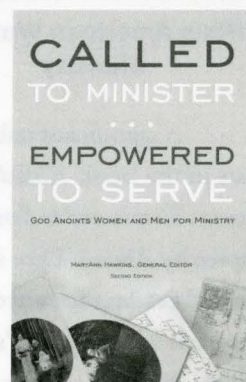


Jean McKibben (of the veterans' auxiliary) and Dr. Walter

listed for one year at age 18 in Saline, Michigan (for

project. He and Dr. Walter Froese then traveled to LaGrange to visit the site as well as work in the local library and city government records to determine more of Fisher's history in LaGrange.

We look forward to sharing more in the coming issue of the Historian related to this ongoing investigation of Fisher and Family.



This important book on "God's anointing of women and men for ministry" is available in both print and electronic versions.

Called to Minister, Empowered to Serve: God Anoints Women and Men for Ministry, MaryAnn Hawkins, General Editor (Warner Press: 2013).

Warner Press: retails for \$17.99 at: <http://alturl.com/3wowb>

The Kindle version retails for \$9.99 from Amazon: at <http://alturl.com/vgx4u>

This book also has six free lessons for a congregational curriculum and study. It is located at:

<http://www.anderson.edu/sites/default/files/migrate/sot/wim/called-to-minister.pdf>

African American Women in Ministry

A significant tribute exists in the book, *Called to Minister, Empowered to Serve*. The chapter by Alice J. Dise is essential reading for anyone interested in the church's history. By Dise's admission, the chapter is only a fragment of the much larger list of Black women who were pioneers within the Church of God "often with unbearable constraints."

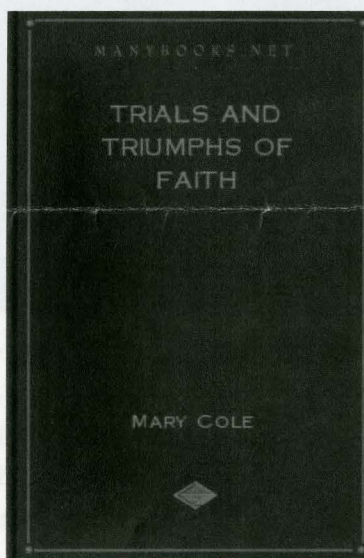
Dise chronicles important leaders, such as Jane Williams from South Carolina (1886), Mary Frambo, Nancy Ford, Ozzie Garrett, and Mother Pricilla Wimbish (and her husband) who is credited with the dream for the West Middlesex Campground (PA).

A must read entry concerns Emma Crosswhite, who along with her husband founded the interracial Church of God in Washington Court House (OH).

As Dise closes the chapter she writes, "*These women (and so many more) served from the pulpit to the kitchen with honor, dignity, and pride. The history of the Church of God has been indelibly imprinted with their person, their labors, and their bequeathals. Their stories serve as a challenge to all women to become whatever God calls them to be....*"

The Ongoing Story of Mary Cole: by Dale Stultz and David Neidert

As noted on the front page of this *Historian*, Mary Cole was the genesis of this issue. Google her name along with her 1914 book, *Trials and Triumphs of Faith*, and you will discover pages of companies selling her book or providing it free in a PDF download (since it is now in the public domain of publishing).



Doug Welch and Dale Stultz provide an introductory treatment of Cole's life and her influence on the Church of God.¹ Melissa Berry provides a follow up article in the *Historian*, "Remembering A Faithful Servant," about Cole and the memorial marker now

placed on her gravesite in Anderson (Ind.).²

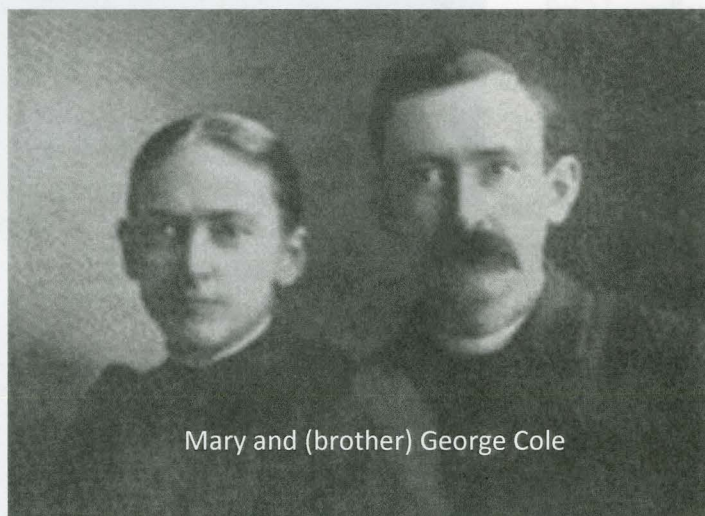
Dale Stultz, in his never ending pursuit of Church of God history, is carefully dissecting Cole's book in order to glean information about her travels, life and ministry. Stultz has already followed her path to Chicago and the building of the Missionary Home in that city in 1903. C.E. Brown recounts the building of this home in *When the Trumpet Sounded*, as "a massive three-story structure...that occupied a conspicuous place on the corner...with a church building behind it."³ In time, Stultz hopes to make *Trials and Triumphs of Faith* available with pictures, records, and other documents that

Cole references throughout her book.

¹Dale Stultz and Doug Welch, "Mary Who?" *The Church of God Historian* Vol 10 (Anderson, Indiana: Historical Society of the Church of God, Anderson, IN) Winter 2010 no 2, 1-2.

² Melissa K. Berry, "Remembering A Faithful Servant: Mary Cole," *The Church of God Historian* Vol 12 (Historical Society of the Church of God, Anderson, IN) Spring 2012 no 3, 7.

³ Charles Ewing Brown, *When the Trumpet Sounded: A History of the Church of God Reformation Movement*, (Anderson, IN: The Warner Press, 1951), 200.



Mary and (brother) George Cole

Upcoming Issues

We trust you have enjoyed the Fall and Winter issues (and all those past) of the *Historian*. The purpose of such publications is to share ongoing research and insights gained from historical investigation.

We have now identified themes that will guide each of the publications, so that you might read about current work and investigation (or stories) written to give a broad perspective concerning historical events and people in the Church of God. We also hope these stories provide food for thought...to reflect on heritage and what it means for our own time.

The Spring/ Summer *Historian* issue will focus on camp meetings and the camp meeting phenomenon. We are commissioning articles that will cover the US and Canada.

Our Fall issue will focus on missionary homes. The recent book, *The Gospel Trumpet Years*, prodded this line of thought, as well as the work taking place related to Mary Cole. These

homes were essential in the early ministry of the Church of God. We hope to provide more stories around the importance of these endeavors and the people who operated them.

We are also continuing our work with additions to the Historical Society website. This electronic portal has permitted us to make contact with a growing network of individuals and share the story of the Church of God.

In the coming months, an editorial plan will be considered for 2015. Such strategies help us to work in advance for gathering information and crafting the stories (via research) that go with them. We hope to share these with you in the *Historian's* Fall edition.



Pansy Brown continued from page 6

Dr. Charles Myricks, Chief Operating and Development Officer of the National Association, sums up her life and legacy by sharing,

*"Dr. Pansy Brown was a great voice and advocate in preparing the saints for excellence in ministry. To honor her legacy the National Association annually recognizes an individual for exemplary service in the Church of God by awarding them the Pansy M. Brown Distinguished Service Award."*¹⁰

Dr. Pansy Brown's personal, local, national, and international work will not be forgotten as her love remains in the hearts of many. There is no question that loving God and obeying his call filled her lifetime.

Dr. Alexa Beverly is new dean of intercultural engagement at Anderson University. She is the former dean of the school of adult studies.

¹ James E. Massey, *African Americans and the Church of God*, Anderson, Indiana: Aspects of a Social History, (Anderson University Press: Indiana, 2005), 207.

² Ibid., 212.

³ Conversation of author with Dolores Gidney.

⁴ Email with the author from Dr. Cheryl Sanders, February 6, 2014.

⁵ Cheryl J. Sanders, *How Firm a Foundation: Eighty Years of History at Third Street Church of God*, Washington, DC, (1910-1990), Privately printed, 5.

⁶ Evelyn P. Wilson, "The In-Service Training Institute: An Overview," *Diamond Jubilee: National Association of the Church of God*, (jointly published by the National Association of the Church of God and Warner Press, Inc.: Indiana, 1991), 44.

⁷ Robert A. Dulin, "Pansy Brown—Commitment Makes Christian Stateswoman," *Christian Leadership*, June 1980, 11.

⁸ Ibid., 11.

⁹ Massey, 205.

¹⁰ Conversation with Dr. Myricks.

The *Historian* wishes to thank Mrs. Vivian Nieman, Church of God Archivist, for her ongoing assistance in providing photographs and bibliographic information when possible. We deeply appreciate of her assistance.

A Family Heritage and Gift *by Dr. MaryAnn Hawkins*

They were sisters: The youngest one's name was Mildred, the other, Isabelle.

Isabelle was the oldest child of

William and Clara Beezley of Merrimac Springs, MO. As Isabelle finished the education available to her she began leading

the singing for a variety of camp meetings and revivals in Missouri. The Gospel Trumpet "Field Reports" for December 1910 and March 1912 name Sis. Isabelle Beezley who "...was used of the Lord as a worker and in the singing."¹ Isabelle ultimately headed to Anderson, IN to briefly join the Gospel Trumpet Family.

Mildred and Isabelle were

cousins to John A. Morrison who would become the first President of what is now Anderson University. It was in Anderson that Isabelle met

Ed Holcomb, a young man who felt the call of God on his life, to be a minister of the Word of God. Ed and Isabelle married and moved to

Northern California as church planters. They were both ordained several years later.

Mildred was just a year old when she and her mother both contracted polio. Clara Beezley died April 18, 1907 and Mildred was left with difficulty on the left side of her body. Mildred was only thirteen when she took the train from Missouri to join her

sister and brother-in-law on the west coast. A few years later, Mildred was playing the piano for a traveling Church of God evangelist in tent meetings throughout northern and central California. It was during one of those tent meetings that Mildred met Richard Kyker. They were married a few years later and helped Frank and Margaret LaFont and Ernie and Grace LaFont plant the Church of God in Bakersfield, California (1941). Mildred's handicap never hindered her commitment to be active in the proclamation of the Gospel.

Isabelle and Mildred were women who played significant roles in the ministry of the Church of God on the west coast of the United States in the early

years of the Reformation Movement. Some hundred years later, four of the eight grandchildren of Mildred and Richard serve full-time in ministry. I am an ordained woman in ministry in the Church of God because of this heritage. As one of Mildred's granddaughters, I count it a gift to be linked to a history of women in ministry.

Dr. MaryAnn Hawkins is the Convener for the Church of God to the Wesleyan Holiness Clergy Women, Dean of the SOT Chapel, and professor of Intercultural service at the Anderson University School of Theology.

¹ Frank Schneider. "Field Reports" The Gospel Trumpet December 22, 1910



Isabelle and Mildred Beezley

Far Left to Right: [Advertising & Sales before Camp Meetings]

Brother Ed Holcomb, Belle M. Watson, Brother R. Hale. Sister Bessie Rodormel at book sewing machine. (Photo c.a. 1920s)



Why I am Church of God *by Dr. Kimberly Majeski*

Note: The blog, Pa-theos.com, asked a question where individuals filled in the response in 200 words or less. Dr. Majeski responded to "Why I am...?" (April 5, 2013) The accompanying photo sits in her office to remind her of her calling to ministry.

I am Church of God, Anderson, IN because I was raised up in love. I have been reared in the tradition that also loved and fostered my parents and grandparents. I was born into a local church where a founding pastor of the 1930's had been a woman, raised up under a sense of welcome and inclusion, taught the distinctions of our Wes-

leyan-Holiness heritage.¹

I was reared in a church where I was invited to sing a special at six years old, where I watched women kneel and wash the feet of other women, spread the feast for a pie social and gather for Tuesday morning prayer.

As an adult I pursued ordination in this tradition and have attained graduate degrees at our School of Theology where I now also teach and I am committed to the fierce, radical passion for justice and evangelism that animated the earliest days of our Movement. I am the Spirit daughter of Lena Schoffner, pioneer

Church of God preacher who demanded the rope separating races be torn down, I am an heir to the Movement who would welcome Every One to the table of love.

Dr. Kimberly Majeski is Associate Professor of Biblical Studies and Christian Ministry. Her blog focuses regularly on women in ministry. Find it at: <http://www.kimberlymajeski.com/>

¹ Majeski shared with the editor that her father did not hear a male preach in this home congregation until he was 12 years old.

Hispanic Women in Ministry

These stories have not been heard.

That is the important lesson from Nilah Meier-Youngman in her chapter of *Called to Minister: Empowered to Serve*. The chapter is important not only because it heralds women leaders in the United States, but also those in Latin America.

Meier-Youngman shares short biographies of Hispanic women who shaped programs and the church in the West and South. Annie Toffola, for example was the first and only women editor to-date of *La Trompeta*, the Spanish Church of God publication. She also writes of Una Janes and Evelyn Anderson who gave significant leadership to evangelism in Corpus Christi (TX). We are also blessed by the background of the call to ministry of Cynthia and Richard Mansfield, who have been pastoring in Albuquerque (NM) for decades (currently at New Beginnings).

A major story is that of Amelia Valdez Vazquez who served both as a pastor and now active lay minister in Saltillo, Mexico. For over 26 years, Amelia taught at La Buena Tierra Bible Institute, providing passionate leadership to the Churches of God in Mexico (*note: the editor has been privileged to work with Amelia while in Mexico*). As Meier-Youngman observes, "In both Americas, women are awakening and responding to Christ's call to ministry by living out and proclaiming his word of freedom, wholeness, forgiveness and healing."



From Right to Left (Back Row): Lillie Thompson, Ada Cooper, and Lulu Hessey

From Right to Left (Front Row): Susie Martin and Emma Sharp

The Historical Society of the Church of God

Send Correspondence to:

Historical Society of the Church of God
P.O. Box 702
Anderson, Indiana 46015

Email Correspondence to:

Dr. Merle Strege
Historical Society President
mdstrege@anderson.edu

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Membership to the Society is open to all who are vitally interested in what the Society desires to accomplish as stated in its purpose. Membership dues are \$15 per year (\$10 for students.) Checks should be made payable to: The Historical Society of the Church of God and sent to the Society's address listed under correspondence.

www.choghistoricalsociety.org

Haven't viewed the Society's website in a while? It has been fully updated. Visit the site often. Share the URL above with your friends and those who might be interested. Help us expand the readership.

Froese shares German Church of God

Dr. Walter Froese, professor emeritus of Church history and author of *People of Faith in Turbulent Times* (Historical Society: 2010) shared his findings and work with the Church of God Reformation course at Anderson University School of Theology recently. Froese, on the invitation of Dr. Gary Agee who teaches the course, highlighted the founding, struggles, expansion and sacrifice of the Church of God, its missionaries and pastors in Eastern Europe prior to

and during WWI and WWII.

During the hour, Froese shared with a group of 25 faculty, students, and community guests, about the thousands of hours of study in the German language primary source materials (including the *Evangeliums Posaune*, diaries, and letters housed in the Church of God Archives) to write this book. Froese introduced those present to key church leaders who rightly should receive further biographical study, such as Gus-

tav Sonneberg, Rudolf Malzon and August Krebs to name but a few.

The book is available for sale through Dr. Froese at wfroese@anderson.edu and all proceeds go to a trust fund in honor of his late wife Gerda Froese.

