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Disciples of Christ Historical Society

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Disciples and Higher Education

Streamlines: Noteworthy
News and Avouchments

Relationship: A Historical Definition
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THE STONE-CAMPBELL MOVEMENT
A GLOBAL HISTORY

D. NEWELL WILLIAMS
DOUGLAS A. FOSTER
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GENERAL EDITORS

"A MONUMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT."

JAMES DUKE,
BRITE DIVINITY SCHOOL
Changes. David Bowie sang out in a rock-n-roll stutter that changes were inevitable. 'I watch the ripples change their size,' Bowie said, 'but never leave the stream.' So, no, we haven't left the stream. We're still navigating the same historical waters. It's just that it seemed time to update the name of our journal to match where we are today – and where we’re going.

*Disciples History Magazine* will still feature the quality you've come to expect in *Discipliana*, while at the same time offering more news and features. In fact, it will be your gateway to all things pertinent concerning our Stone-Campbell history.

I'm like everyone else. Change can sometimes be painful. But, I've also found that, somehow, I always survive the changes that come my way. Whether in our lives individually, or in our life together as community, the ripples of change are as sure as the changing tide. Perhaps the pain really comes because of how rapidly things change in our time. For our ancestors, while changes came along, they arrived much less often than they do now. With change on the other side of virtually every wave, we have to adapt quickly, or be left wondering why everyone – and everything – have left us behind.
Since none of us want to be stranded in yesterday (no, dear reader, not even us historians), we regularly look around to make sure that we boarded the ship the same as everyone else. Our destination is a common one. A destination that we all hope to arrive at – and the arrival will be sweeter if we get there together. We are, all of us, sailing on the stream to tomorrow and, once there, will be able to look back, assess the changing tides that led us there, and relax for a moment in gratitude and expectation.

So, welcome to Disciples History Magazine. It's where the future of history begins.

Glenn Thomas Carson
President
Features

Pivotal Role:
How Women Shaped Japanese and Indian Churches
By Loretta Hunnicutt

Member Profile
featuring Charlotte and James Gadberry.

A Confusing Maze of Knowledge:
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Streamlines: Noteworthy News and Avouchments

Relationship: A Historical Definition
From the Reverend Dr. Alvin O’Neal Jackson

and the Park Avenue Christian Church of New York City

Celebrating 203 years of ministry, music and the divinity of difference in the city of New York

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Planting Seeds of Wholeness Since 1935
In 2002, Philip Jenkins' *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* confronted Christians in North America with the knowledge that the bulk of the growth and energy in Christianity had shifted to the global South (South American, Africa, and Asia). He postulated that by 2050, only a small minority of Christians would be white Americans Europeans. This, of course has a myriad of implications for American Christians, and in particular his analysis clearly describes the experiences of the Stone-Campbell tradition.

Witness the phenomenal growth among Stone-Campbell churches in Africa and Asia (particularly China and India). At a minimum it indicates the need to expand the study of Stone-Campbell history from its traditional focus on North America (or at best on the English-speaking world) to incorporate global experiences. In the case of women, this mission is particularly urgent. Among most members, the knowledge of women's experiences in the history of the Stone-Campbell heritage is limited to begin with, but if one narrows the focus to the experiences of women who are not white and do not speak English, a deep void appears. The existence of this void often leaves the members of our congregations with the impression that only the contributions of white (and probably male) leaders have mattered. Putting Asian women at the center of the story reveals many of the inadequacies of that perspective.

Reconstructing the experiences of Asian women (particularly in Japan and India) in the early twentieth century takes several steps toward filling the historical void. The first half of the twentieth century represented the peak in global missions – particularly for Stone-Campbell churches. In the first half of the twentieth century, hundreds of missionaries served in Asia alone, many of them in two particular
HOW WOMEN SHAPED JAPANESE AND INDIAN CHURCHES
BY LORETTA HUNNICUTT
Women in Japan who converted to Christianity had reduced chances of marriage and were often at odds with their families.

countries: India and Japan. Historians have documented much of the activity of the missionaries, but what remains unknown is the role that Asians themselves, and particularly Asian women, played in the success of this work. Examining the role of Asian women offers a number of key advantages. First, understanding Stone-Campbell women in Asia enhances the understanding of the regions of the world experiencing much of the growth today. Second, these women played (and continue to play) a pivotal role in the expansion of the tradition. Third, the experiences of Asian women reveal the challenges that nonwhite, non-English speaking women faced and the sacrifices they made in participating in Stone-Campbell churches.

Any historian who seeks to reconstruct the experiences of Asian Women in the Stone-Campbell heritage confronts one essential problem: sources. The few descriptions of these women that exist generally come from the perspective of those who sought to convert them. Few of these women ever had the opportunity to record their own thoughts. The missionaries who worked with these women varied in their attitude toward them, but generally the mindset (often described by historians as imperialist) of the missionaries reflected a belief that the citizens of Asia were unfortunate in their circumstances at best and heathen sinners at worst. This often left little room for a deep appreciation of the complexity in the lives of these potential converts.
The influence of Christian faith in India often broke down social barriers of women of different castes.

With careful interpretation, however, a few important sources allow us a glimpse of the lives of women in India and Japan in the early twentieth century. For instance, two missionaries from the British Churches of Christ recorded their experiences in India in *Winged Feet: Archie and Maggie Watters’ Story of Adventures Following in the service of the Cross* compiled by Maggie Watters in 1981. Their account is particularly valuable because they made obvious efforts to respect the culture and practices of the men and women they encountered. This resulted in vivid descriptions of the challenges faced by those who converted to Christianity including the reactions of their families and the motivations converts had in seeking conversion. A co-worker of the Watters, Anne Piggot, wrote *Pen Pictures from India* in 1928 which chronicled many of the converts in the Churches of Christ Mission in Daltonganj. While not as tolerant as the Watters of the cultural practices among the Indians, Piggot nevertheless documents the experiences of Indian women at the Mission.

Two biographies also provide glimpses into the role of Asian Women in the Stone-Campbell heritage, particularly Japanese women. Fiona Soltes’ biography of Sarah Andrews, *Virtuous Servant*, is based partly on interviews with the niece of Iki Naemura, one of Andrews’ first converts during her work in Japan and her “helper, friend and confi-
dante for the rest of her days.\textsuperscript{4} The life of Disciples missionary Itoko Maeda is chronicled in Marilynne Hill's \textit{Itoko Maeda: Woman of Mission}.\textsuperscript{5} Together these two biographies help to reconstruct the experiences of Stone-Campbell women in Asia.

Generally, women numbered among the first converts to Stone-Campbell churches in Japan and India. Leadership roles among Indian and Japanese women who joined Stone-Campbell congregations often resided with a group known as Bible Women. Since many women, particularly in India, were allowed to interact only with males who were relatives, Bible women served as an important link between the Christian missionaries and isolated women. In \textit{Winged Feet}, Maggie Watters describes Susanna Sahay, a Bible Woman employed by the British Churches of Christ who in addition to caring for her own family and working as a trained midwife, visited women in several villages preaching and reading the Bible to them. She was responsible for many converts to the church there. Watters notes that Bible Women were often widows but in areas of desperate need married women filled in part time. They visited homes and worked much like itinerant preachers, reaching out to women in their district. Sahay had good success reaching women and their families in her district, baptizing dozens of new church members.\textsuperscript{6}

Like other converts to Christianity, women of the Stone-Campbell tradition experienced dramatic changes in their life circumstances following their conversion. One convert, Jaswa, visited British mis-
sionary Anne Piggot several times under cover of darkness before declaring her desire to be a Christian. Horrified by her decision, her family engaged in a series of actions designed to dissuade her from pursuing her new faith. According to Piggot, they identified a place in the house where they would bury her after they cut her up and explained to the neighbors that she had gone to live with relatives in Calcutta. They also gave her clothes and jewels as well as money for extra treats. Jaswa at first was too terrified to leave her family. Later, she reported a vision of two men in shining white robes who asked her whether she would return to the Christians. Jaswa recalled her conversion and decided to go back. Later, according to Piggot, Jaswa rescued a girl of the “despised sweeper caste” who had fallen into a rushing river. Her case represents the influence of Christian faith in India which often broke down social barriers among women.

Indian women played a key role in the development of Stone-Campbell churches in India. Among the first converts were Lakhpatia, a widow, and her niece Moolrie. They would become a pivotal part of the British Churches of Christ Mission as preachers and teachers. Their conversion also suggests the complexity of the experience of Indian Christian women. Moolrie first met Christian missionaries when she was eight. At the age of 11, she ran away from her home to join the Mission – motivated in part by the fact that her father planned to marry her to a much older man because he would receive more money than he would from marrying her to someone closer to her own age. Before she arrived she was recaptured by her father and imprisoned in her home on a diet of bread and water for several months. She was released only so her family could regain her income from the water she carried to families in the village. Despite this ordeal, she escaped again at the first opportunity and returned to the Mission. This time she arrived safely and when her proposed husband threatened to kill her, her father agreed to allow her to go away for an education. She studied for five years in another city and then returned to serve as Bible Woman.

Moolrie and Lakhpatia often facilitated the conversion of local residents. One of the boys attending the Mission school arrived on a Sunday night and asked the Watters, who both had medical training, to help his ailing grandfather, a local resident of high caste. The couple nursed him back to health and in the meantime became familiar with many members of the

*Continued on page 28*
It's no puzzle how they're linked.

www.WorldConvention.org
A desk perfectly designed for a gothic structure such as the Thomas W. Phillips Memorial Archives has come to the president's office. It is the gift of Central Woodward Christian Church, Detroit, Michigan.

The desk has a notable history. It was used by the late Edgar DeWitt Jones until his retirement in 1947. Willis Jones, Edgar's son, will now use the desk during his administration as president of Disciples of Christ Historical Society.

Delivery of the desk to the Society added a striking new entry in its unique and meaningful history. It came from Detroit on the top of a private automobile and was delivered in person by Mr. and Mrs. Edmund Darling, long-time members of Central Woodward Church.

Discipliana, May 1960
The new Stone-Campbell global history is "well-researched, carefully organized, and consistently insightful."

—Mark A. Noll, historian, University of Notre Dame

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Your financial support helps us to tell our story all around the world.

Arnold Nelson, Chairman
DCHS Board of Trustees

Disciples History Magazine is just one benefit of membership.

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For Charlotte and Jim Gadberry, family is a big part of life. With three children (and their spouses) and eight grand-daughters, all of whom live in Little Rock, life stays busy. Jim enjoys hunting at his duck club and takes along interested members of the family. Charlotte still consults with nonprofit organizations, plays tennis, serves on boards, and volunteers with community organizations. Currently, she is chairing the implementation of a visual and performing arts festival for central Arkansas. Recently the Gadberrys returned from a photo safari in Botswana and South Africa, and travel remains a big part of their lives. Charlotte says, "My terms on the Board of Disciples History were truly beneficial to me and I miss the regular interaction with all the interesting people I met there."
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— DLP Fellow, Zane Ridings
At the meeting of the 1947 International Convention of the Christian churches in New York, the Disciples delegates heard Riley B. Montgomery, president of Lynchburg College, and an ordained minister, call for Disciples to support their colleges so that Disciples colleges might educate new leaders for a more humane and peaceful world. Then, Montgomery challenged the Disciples to lead the way to the unity of all Christians for the sake of the unity of the human family. He spoke with conviction and with courage. “It seems clear,” he said, “that we cannot gain a friendly, peaceful and unified world by following our selfish and prejudiced ways.”

Montgomery reminded the convention that a united church and united human community, even if such a vision were ever achieved, would not be static. Rather, such a unity would always be dynamic and progressive. “How is this new world unity to be created?” he questioned. He insisted that neither wealth, nor military force could achieve unity, but education through the liberal arts. Beyond teaching skills and transmitting knowledge, Montgomery said, colleges have to have a moral and spiritual foundation in their approach to education.

Liberal arts colleges, he continued, not only teach students how to think, they give students something to think about and guide them “through the confusing maze of knowledge to some constructive principles and Christian conclusions.” Montgomery declared that a college has not completed its task until it has chal-
lenged students to dedicate “their lives with all their abilities and all their powers to Christian service.”

Dr. Montgomery and other 20th century Disciples leaders were students of the historian and philosopher, Arnold Toynbee, who studied the sweep of human history and wrote twelve volumes over a period of thirty years entitled, *A Study of History*. It was Toynbee who wrote that a moral world needs leaders who see a larger picture, and take the initiative to transform the present situation into something new for the benefit of humanity, even at personal sacrifice. But, Toynbee reminded his students, even when we get to the next level, to something new, it will not be a resting-place. Toynbee warned that “rest cannot be procured for human beings in this world by means of institutions, even if these are admirably designed for meeting the needs of the time, and even if they are accepted whole-heartedly and operate in good faith.”

The institutions themselves are not the change-agents. But without them we would have no places to discover our abilities for Christian service. On that Montgomery was clear. An education in the liberal arts leads to a personal worldview that is both moral and spiritual.

I am encouraged when I go to Disciples liberal arts colleges and interact with intelligent students and hear them speak about taking on the vocation of service and life-long learning. I am encouraged when they talk about their international friendships and their experiences of inter-religious dialogue. I am encouraged by Disciples of Christ colleges’ non-sectarian openness to inquiry for truth, making them relevant to the needs of the world today.

Maybe the maze isn’t so confusing after all.

A. Guy Waldrop, D.D. is Director of the Council of Colleges and Universities of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
The Stone-Campbell Scramble, a four player "best ball" golf tournament will be held Friday, July 12, 2013 at the Ridgewood lakes Golf Club in Davenport, Florida prior to the General Assembly meeting in Orlando. This event is a joint venture of Disciples of Christ Historical Society and the General Conference of Disciple Men and is open to all for a $60 inclusive fee. For more information contact Arnold Nelson at: arnold@fccduncan.com.

The 2013 Christian Scholars Conference meets at Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tennessee, June 6-8. John Dean, former counsel to President Richard Nixon is among the plenary speakers. More at www.lipscomb.edu/csc.

Disciples Divinity House at Vanderbilt once again celebrated "Talent 4 the House," on Thursday, April 4, 2013 at Woodmont Christian Church, Nashville, Tennessee. The evening included a homemade supper, silent auction and outstanding Nashville entertainment. This year's performers included Vince Gill, Jonell Mosser, Andrew Peterson, Gabe Dixon, and House musicians. In 2013, Talent 4 the House brought together Disciples from more than 20 area churches in support of ministry students at the Disciples House and raised $14,000. Disciples House is grateful for the sponsorship of Disciples of Christ Historical Society in this effort.
Douglas Collins was selected as Eureka College's recipient of the 2012 Lincoln Academy of Illinois Student Laureate Award. The award recognizes outstanding academic achievement, campus leadership and extracurricular activities among Illinois college and university seniors. Collins formerly was a member of the Board of Directors of Eureka Heart House, a shelter for homeless women and children. After graduation in May he starts the M.Div. program at Disciples Divinity House, University of Chicago.

The 2013 Isaac Errett Award for best essay was presented to Joel Brown, a Th.M. candidate at Brite Divinity School. The award is presented annually at the Stone-Campbell Journal Conference. Brown received the award from Disciples History board member Rick Cherok of Cincinnati Christian University.

Disciples History and the Cane Ridge Meeting House will share exhibit space at the 2013 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in Orlando July 13-17.
Coming Soon
An online curriculum, a six-course study on the History and Beliefs of Stone-Campbell churches.

Scott Seay of Christian Theological Seminary, and managing editor of *The Stone-Campbell Movement: A Global History* (Chalice Press, 2013), was featured as the 2013 Kirkpatrick Lecturer at a March gathering at Riverside Avenue Christian Church in Jacksonville, Florida.

Our newest exhibit “The Stormy Question: Christian Churches and the Slavery Issue” showcases the Society’s collections documenting the various positions taken by the Disciples of Christ on slavery, the Civil War, and emancipation. These documents, books, illustrations and artifacts tell a compelling story of a faith community struggling with the issues and events of the nineteenth century. We invite you to visit the Historical Society to view this unique exhibit. An expanded version of the exhibit is online at www.DisciplesHistory.org.
The tips in this book will help your congregation understand the next steps you must take to reach the decisions necessary for change.

Available for download at www.PolarStarPress.com
It is this humanizing process, acquiring a sense of knowing the man by seeing where and how he lived, where he worked, by seeing the landscapes he enjoyed, by touching some of the same things and occupying the same spaces, all the while acquiring a heightened sense of the spiritual guidance and inspiration he felt, and then experiencing the very places he went to act upon those divine calls. These are the reasons that we preserve, exhibit, and interpret the unique and precious artifacts held by the Historical Society. We seek understanding and communion with the...
founder of our faith tradition, so that we may renew our commitment to continue the work he began. In my opinion, this is the fundamental significance, the essential integrity represented and embodied in the tangible, the touchable aspects of Campbell. This significance transcends the merely material cultural history which is commonly ascribed to collections.

The essential function of any exhibited collection is to educate with artifacts and to provide a clear sense of the significance of the person honored. This has been referred to as the 'terminal thought,' the one thing that we want people to retain as they go about their daily lives. As noted, much of this process of reaching understanding (and maybe even communion with) the founder can be accomplished incrementally in various exhibition and interpretive venues. Some of these teaching moments might be spiritual in their cumulative effect as the connection with the historic figure, in my example Campbell, is made and reinforced.

The connection, then, leads to a transforming experience where we reach from our own world into that past world of the person honored, and take the inspirations which he felt and add them to our own, so that we can move forward confident that it is the same faith that wells up in our hearts as it did in those who came before us.

C. Richard Bierce is a historical architect and preservation consultant and is a former chairman of the Board of Trustees of Disciples of Christ Historical Society
Continued from page 13

household, especially Maggie who was befriended by the women of the household. Acting as nurses, Moolrie and Lakhpatia, began accompanying Maggie when she visited the home.  

Though the missionaries initially attracted interest from Indians, after their initial visit to the household of the school child’s grandfather, the two nurses received frequent invitations to return to the home. The grandfather shared the home with the families of his two brothers (one of whom had already died) and a widowed sister. At first, the Christian nurses continued the medical care of the household, but soon, they were providing reading instruction for the women, particularly the widows, and then religious instruction. Eventually, the women of the household expressed their desire to become Christians. Since many of them were widows and therefore of low status in Indian society, they may have seen the church as a place of refuge and affirmation (much as Moolrie herself had as a child). Unfortunately, their male relatives refused to allow their conversion. Over time, the women smuggled jewels and money out of the household and awaited an opportunity when the men were away from the household to escape. When that time came, they arrived at the Mission run by the Watters and declared their desire to convert. The Watters welcomed them but also urged caution. According to Archie Watters, they avoided feeding the women as that would have required them to break caste and thereby prevented them from ever returning to their home. However, when their male relatives sent food for them, the women requested that the Watters bury it because they feared it would be poisoned. Once the women were baptized and participated in communion services that required them to be served by those of other castes, their male relatives disowned them and asked that they be sent away. The Watters found other living arrangements for them and some of the younger women found husbands among Christians in other communities. While the Watters role in the women’s conversion was important, the teaching of Moolrie and Lakhpatia also figured prominently.

Moolrie and Lakhpatia may also have been the reason the Watters respected Indian cultural practices as much as they did. In *Winged Feet*, Maggie Watters explains that she usually accompanied Lakhpatia and Moolrie who introduced her as the nurses visited the homes of other women. On one occasion, when they assisted a young girl in the delivery of her baby, Lakhpatia prevented Maggie from moving a sickle that had been placed at the foot of the girl’s bed. Lakhpatia explained that if Maggie had altered the position of the sickle, the girl “would have let her
baby die, because she would have said that the protection she had against evil spirits entering into her or her baby had been tampered with." Maggie Watters demonstrated her appreciation of the key role that Lakhpatia and others played in her missionary efforts in this instance and in many others: "Here was a lesson I had to learn so as not to offend this Hindu girl and her family, and, at the same time, have the humility to do so. This is where we have to have the people of this country help us while we help them, so that we might have a better understanding." 

Japanese women served the cause of the Stone-Campbell tradition in many important ways and often paid a high price for doing so. In 1905, the Disciples opened the Margaret K. Long School for girls in a Tokyo suburb. It soon became one of the most important schools in Japan playing an important role in the conversion of many Japanese women. Several converts who attended the school then made many contributions to the growth of Christianity in Japan. The story of Itoko Maeda, graduate of the girls' school, illuminates many themes of Japanese women in Christianity. Her parents sent her and her sister, Kimiyo, to the school to get an education perhaps because Maeda's mother had been educated at a Christian Mission school (Joshi Sei Gakuen) herself. According to her biographer, Marilynne Hill, Maeda's grandfather warned her about the school saying "Only get an education there... Do not get Christianity." If a Japanese woman converted, it significantly reduced her chances of marriage, in addition to setting her at odds with her family. Thus, her grandfather made her promise never to become a Christian. Maeda kept her promise until the death of her grandfather which she felt freed her to make her own choice. Despite her family's warnings, Maeda was baptized on December 17, 1933. She never married.

Despite the early sacrifices she made in joining the Stone-Campbell work, Maeda would enjoy a successful career as teacher, missionary, and peacemaker. After the war, she completed her education at College of the
Bible (where she was also ordained) and obtained a post at a Methodist school in Okinawa. While there, she was instrumental in organizing cooperative efforts between American military women and Okinawan women to observe events such as the World Day of Prayer. Her success eventually extended well beyond her home country. After she left Japan, she worked in Paraguay, Brazil, and several other South American countries with Japanese communities. And Maeda was the first Japanese missionary commissioned by the United Christian Missionary Society. During her time in Brazil she frequently visited pastorless rural churches where she often filled in as a preacher. In Bolivia she oversaw a school that served native Bolivians and Okinawan immigrants. She also sought to break down barriers between the Catholic and Protestants in the area. 

Many Japanese women played key roles in establishing Stone-Campbell churches in their nation. In the Sendai District of Japan, Kiyomi Kawamura served as a Bible Woman in the work of Mr. and Mrs. M.B. Madden. She was also expected to take music lessons and instruct other young women in musical performance for the benefit of the church and any visitors to the mission. In 1904, according to Mrs. Madden’s report to the Missionary Intelligencer, Kawamura raised enough money to construct a church in her home town, Akozu. 

Another Japanese Christian woman, Iki Naemura, contributed significantly to the work of Sarah Andrews, a missionary to Japan from the Churches of Christ for much of the twentieth century. Naemura was one of Andrews’ first converts and the two became close friends. “Iki-san,” as Andrews referred to her, accompanied her friend to the United States for more training and worked alongside the missionaries to teach in the Sunday Schools and work in the churches founded by Andrews. At the height of their work in the 1930s, the Sunday Schools had nearly 400 students, and three of their church had their own buildings. Andrews referred to Naemura as “her right hand.”

Much of the work of Japanese women is documented in Yunosuke Hiratsuka’s History of the Church in Japan, published in 1952. The first convert of Church of Christ missionaries, Hiratsuka’s history catalogues the many missionaries and Japanese Christians that helped build churches throughout the nation. For instance, one of the most influential Bible Women in Japan, Mrs. Kato, taught as many as 70 or 80 children in Sunday Schools in Japan in 1907 and led women’s meetings at the Koishikawa Church of Christ. Her support came from women in churches throughout Tennessee. She baptized dozens of women during her career with the Koishikawa church.
The experiences of Asian women in Stone-Campbell churches reveal how much of our tradition is left to discover – especially by North American members. While the work of missionaries rightly draws the focus of historians, there is another dimension that must be understood as well: the impact on, and by, the converts. These voices are so buried that they take great care and effort to uncover. *The Stone-Campbell Movement: A Global History* (Chalice Press, 2013) represents a real attempt at recovering the experiences of as many Stone-Campbell leaders as possible. But as the historians who contributed to the project acknowledge, this is only the beginning. There remains years of work yet to be done. While this essay begins this process with the experiences of a few Japanese and Indian women, the same story could easily be told regarding China, Korea, and many other Asian nations as well as nations around the globe. Hopefully, it will be told very soon.

(Endnotes)
6 Watters, 111-113.
7 Piggot, 51-55.
8 Ibid., 69.
9 Watters, p. 62.
10 Watters, p. 37.
12 Ibid, 61.
13 Ibid.
15 Ibid., p. 18-21.
16 Ibid., p. 60, 64.
18 Soltes, p. 17, 26, 28-29.
19 Yunosuke Hiratsuka, *History of the Church in Japan*, p. 3 manuscript in the Center for Restoration Studies, Abilene Christian University, Abilene, TX. Information about Mrs. Kato’s support can be found in an undated newspaper article (source unknown) titled “To Your Account” in the Clara Bishop papers in the Center for Restoration Studies.

Loretta Hunnicutt, Ph.D. is Associate Professor of History and Director of Women’s Studies at Pepperdine University and is a contributing historian to *The Stone-Campbell Movement: A Global History* (Chalice Press, 2013)
Let the stories be told
Let them say what they want,
Let the photos be old
Let them show what they want

Let them leave you up in the air
Let them brush your rock and roll hair
Let the good times roll...

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*Ric Ocasek,
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THE STONE-CAMPBELL MOVEMENT
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D. NEWELL WILLIAMS
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"A MONUMENTAL ACHIEVEMENT."
JAMES DUKE,
BRITE DIVINITY SCHOOL
Will our grandchildren remember us?

All of us have stories – the ups and downs our lives travel as we navigate family, career, joy, and crisis. And those stories, while personal to each of us, have common threads that tie us together as humans on a shared journey.

Our stories, then, are important in a big way: They tell not just who we are personally, but who we are as members of a much larger family. These are stories that identify us, shape us, nurture us, and connect our past selves to our future dreams. And these are stories worthy of holding onto for the generations to come.

So, we ask ourselves, will our grandchildren remember us? And we all, if we’re honest, reply ‘Yes, we hope they do.’

An integral aspect to our shared story is the one telling about our faith heritage. At the heart of our hearts is the God we believe in, the God we follow, the God we serve. Our faith forms the foundation of our whole story. And it is impossible to know who we are without understanding what we believe.

Does it make sense, then, that an organization preserving our faith-story is important to all of us? Is it logical to say that all of us are responsible for keeping our story safe for the future? Do we understand that the safekeeping requires financial support?
I might just as well ask: Will our grandchildren remember us? The ‘Yes’ to that question lies in the safety and well-being of our story.

That’s what Disciples of Christ Historical Society does. That is our mission. We keep our legacy safe and share our story with the world – now and in the future.

But that will only remain true if our membership grows and our members sustain us. Because in supporting this ministry, each member is really keeping safe his and her own story. It is a personal story and a shared story. And it is a story that all of us hope to share with the next generation.

Are you a member of Disciples History? Let me put it another way: will your grandchildren remember you?

Join today at www.discipleshistory.org.

Glenn Thomas Carson
President
Features

Ceremonies of Constitution: The Sycamore Street Church in Transition
By Richard J. Cherok

Member Profile
Featuring Eugene and Elizabeth Regen

Just North of the Mason-Dixon
The Mercersburg Critique of Stone-Campbell Churches
By Shaun Brown

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Cover image and Sycamore Street Church (top) courtesy of Cincinnati Museum Center- Cincinnati Historical Society Library
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“What happened....
And what did they do about it?”
We regret to learn that you, as a church, have so far departed from the order [that we] must declare non-fellowship. What had happened at the church on Sycamore Street in Cincinnati to cause such a reaction? And what did they do about it?

The City of Cincinnati served as a pivotal location for the unfolding history of the Disciples of Christ. “The Disciples,” Garrison and DeGroot note, “had their rise and greatest growth in the area of the frontier,” and Cincinnati was America’s earliest significant frontier city. In 1810, Cincinnati’s population of 2,540 ranked her as the forty-sixth largest community in the United States. Just two decades later, however, her citizenship swelled to 24,831 and she leaped to the position of eighth most populous city in the country. As the “Queen City of the West,” Cincinnati was a natural location for a frontier religion to attract an audience and to gain attention. For this reason, Alexander Campbell conducted two of his debates in Cincinnati and spent a considerable amount of time in the city. Not only did Cincinnati become “a great center for the propagation of original apostolic Christianity,” as Wilcox suggests, but the Disciple leadership in Cincinnati also “became strong enough to challenge the leadership of Bethany.”

As the principles of Campbell’s reform gained momentum—primarily among the Baptists—in the mid-to-late 1820s, it was largely the result of the widespread allure of the Christian Baptist and the effective evangelists who encouraged reform in pre-
dominantly rural areas. The appeal for reform within the pages of the Christian Baptist influenced men like “Raccoon” John Smith and John T. Johnson to traverse the rural regions of Kentucky promoting “Campbellism” among the churches. Similarly, Walter Scott peddled the ideas of reform to the Western Reserve of Ohio, where he conducted an incredibly successful three-year evangelistic campaign. In the urban setting of Cincinnati, however, the wellspring of Disciple growth was markedly different. Though evangelists planted the seeds of reform and a number of local ministers played significant roles, the true emergence of the Disciples of Christ in Cincinnati originated in a single congregation: the Sycamore Street Church. Moreover, as W. T. Moore explains, “no church in the Reformatory Movement has been more influential in shaping the course of the movement” than the Sycamore Street Church and its direct descendants. The design of this study is to explore the origin of the Sycamore Street Church and its transition from a Baptist to a Disciple church.

The Baptists first appeared in Cincinnati in 1813, when a congregation of eleven people began meeting in a log-cabin church near the center of the fledgling city. Following the immersion of their first converts in the summer of 1814 and the construction of a new brick meeting house on property deeded to them by Gen. John S. Gano, the Baptists announced a membership of thirty people by 1815. An 1816 division, however, resulted in the formation of two Baptist churches in Cincinnati. The larger group identified themselves as the “Original and Regular First Baptist Church,” but eventually disbanded in 1831. A much smaller company, consisting of only six laymen and their pastor, endeavored to establish the Enon Baptist Church. This original Enon Baptist Church came to a quick demise, but was resurrected in early 1821 when twenty-nine members of the larger segment of the division were dispatched with the goal of developing a new Enon Baptist Church.

“The Enon Baptist Church of Cincinnati,” as the congregation was incorporated on September 27, 1821, soon called Samuel Eastman to serve as their pastor. They also purchased property in the city center, constructed a brick meeting house designed to accommodate seven-hundred worshipers, and dedicated their
new edifice on March 16, 1822. Eastman’s ministry, which ended after less than a year, appears to have been rather uneventful for the congregation. His successor, John Boyd, brought modest growth to the congregation, but seems also to have unintentionally introduced Alexander Campbell’s reform ideas to the body of believers. During Boyd’s ministry, in late 1824, Philip S. Fall, a Baptist minister and recent convert to Campbell’s views, preached a series of sermons to the Enon Church that was based on the themes espoused by Campbell. Fall’s preaching appears to have swayed the congregation toward “Campbellite” thought, but most significantly influenced David S. Burnet, the sixteen-year-old son of Isaac G. Burnet, Cincinnati’s mayor, to request immersion from Pastor Boyd on December 26, 1824. Moreover, the reform ideas promoted by Fall inspired the young congregation to pursue as their third pastor a reform-minded leader to assume Boyd’s position when he concluded his ministry in March of 1825.

IN THE URBAN SETTING OF CINCINNATI, HOWEVER, THE WELLSPRING OF DISCIPLE GROWTH WAS MARKEDLY DIFFERENT.
James Challen, the twenty-three-year-old protégé of Dr. James Fishback, was called from Lexington to assume the pastoral role of the Enon Baptist Church in October 1825. Challen had been born in Hackensack, New Jersey, but relocated to Lexington as a young man, possibly to study at Transylvania University. In Kentucky, Challen came under the influence of Fishback, a medical doctor and a prominent Baptist minister who was attracted to the reform ideas of Barton W. Stone. Fishback introduced Challen to the ideas of Christian reform and immersed him on January 18, 1823, but neither Challen nor Fishback had the opportunity to meet Alexander Campbell until the fall of 1823. When Campbell made his first preaching trip through Kentucky in October 1823, after his debate with William L. McCalla, Challen was in the midst of the audience that gathered to hear him speak in Lexington. Having “read several numbers of the Christian Baptist,” Robert Richardson recounted, Challen “was a good deal prejudiced against Mr. Campbell on account of what he had said against the clergy and other matters.” Following Campbell’s discourse, however, Challen’s “prejudices were swept away as by a torrent, and he became quite captivated with the principles of the Reformation.”

Through his ministry at the Enon Baptist Church, Challen both cultivated and advanced the Campbellite reforms that were sweeping through Kentucky and northeast Ohio. With the assistance of Jeremiah Vardeman, one of the most successful and respected Baptist evangelists of his day, the notion of reform gained a wide hearing among the Baptists in and around Kentucky. Vardeman’s first experience with Campbell’s reform thought came when he was invited to serve as the reformer’s moderator in his 1823 debate with McCalla. Campbell’s abilities as a debater quickly captured Vardeman’s attention and the two men became close acquaintances. For a time, Vardeman both endorsed and promoted Campbell’s proposals of reform. By the middle of 1830, however, when relations between the Disciples and Baptists began to sour, Vardeman planted himself firmly in the camp of the Baptists.

In late June and July of 1828, Challen brought Vardeman to Cincinnati to hold a series of revival meetings at the Enon Baptist Church. Vardeman’s arrival in the city gained a significant
amount of notice, as throngs of people came to hear him preach. An unidentified correspondent reported to Campbell's Christian Baptist that Vardeman “arrived in Cincinnati the Friday before the 4th Lord's day in June, and immediately after his arrival began to call upon the citizens to ‘reform and believe the gospel!’” Moreover, the correspondent explained, Vardeman baptized forty-one people the first Sunday of his meeting, forty-four the second Sunday, and thirty-three the third Sunday, for a total of 118 baptisms in a span of three weeks. The success of Vardeman's evangelistic campaign not only brought significant growth to the Enon Church, but prompted the church leadership to consider the viability of planting a new Baptist congregation within the confines of their community.

Little more than a month after the close of Vardeman's meetings, on August 26, 1828, the leadership body of the Enon Baptist Church formally resolved to establish a new church. On the evening of October 27, 1828, “about one hundred and twenty names were handed to the clerk” of the Enon Church “for the purpose of constituting another church.” Among those who withdrew from the Enon Church were Challen, who apparently relinquished his pastoral role in the church, and David S. Burnet, who would later serve as the new church's minister on more than one occasion. Prior to the inauguration of the new church, a governing board was established and meetings were held in the council chamber of the city government on October 29 and 31, 1828. In addition to developing a doctrinal statement for the new congregation, the board agreed to offer Challen the sum of $400 to serve as their pastor for the ensuing year.

The official “Ceremonies of Constitution” for the new church occurred at the Enon Baptist Church's house of worship on November 13, 1828. Without a building or a permanent place of worship, the newly formed congregation initially met in private homes, the city council chamber, a school room, and the upper room of a cooper shop (i.e., a barrel-maker's shop). Years later, Challen recalled that the cooper-shop room was about forty feet by seventy feet and “in a rude way fitted up for a chapel.” An anonymous Christian Standard contributor further described the crude conditions of the cooper-shop church: “The seats were of rough pine boards, upon which no plane had ever passed, and
without backs. The pulpit was of the same primitive construction. The house was lighted in the evening with ‘tallow dips,’ in rude chandeliers.”

Additions to the church’s membership came rather frequently and steadily throughout the duration of the congregation’s existence. The first reported convert to the new congregation came soon after the church began meeting. In November of 1828, Sarah Kilgour “related to the church what the Lord had done for her soul” and was received as a member after her baptism. Isaac G. Burnet, the Mayor of Cincinnati for the past decade, was also a noteworthy addition to the fellowship of believers. Burnet, along with his wife and two daughters, was “received by letter from the Enon Baptist Church” on June 9, 1829.

At a meeting of the church board on March 9, 1829, the committee appointed with the task of finding property for the construction of a meeting house notified the congregation that a lot was available for lease on Sycamore Street between Fifth and Sixth Streets. By October 6, 1829, the new meeting house on Sycamore Street was available for use. The completion of their building gave the congregation “a new and beautiful” meeting house “that held over one thousand hearers.” This new structure “was much larger and finer than the old Enon Church, with galleries round three sides, and an old fashioned pulpit, about ten or twelve feet from the floor, with a winding stairway on each side.” In addition, “A stone tablet built into the wall over the large front window bore the inscription, ‘Baptist Church, founded A.D. 29.’”

The most significant challenge to confront the young Sycamore Street Church came in the form of an accusatory letter from the leadership of the Enon Baptist Church on July 3, 1829. “We regret to learn,” the leadership at Enon wrote, “that you, as a church, have so far departed from the order of regular Baptist churches as to permit persons out of order and out of fellowship with regular Baptist churches to commune with you at the Lord’s Table.” The continuation of this practice, the letter concluded, “must cause us to declare ... non fellowship.”

After reviewing the Enon Church’s correspondence, a committee under the chairmanship of Isaac G. Burnet reported the following concerns to the leadership of the Sycamore Street Church:
We must consider the procedure on the part of our Enon brethren extrajudicial, consequently [they] have no right to call upon us to answer for the manner in which we have conducted ourselves as a church, for we derive our authority from the great law-giver and are responsible alone to him for the manner we administer his laws and ordinances, and secondly the charge is general in its terms and therefore difficult to respond to, and in the third place we very much question the propriety of making every departure from our views and opinions a cause of offence or ground of complaint.32

Burnet's committee went on to pen a response to their Baptist colleagues on July 21, 1829. In this letter they expressly noted their right to "Christian liberty" and insisted that the Holy Scriptures, rather than human traditions, must be their "guide in faith and practice and in the order and discipline of the church." Moreover, they noted, the vague nature of the Enon Church's earlier correspondence failed to even identify the supposed "disorderly persons" who were admitted to the Lord's Table.33

A further epistle from the Enon Church clearly delineated the two pivotal points of contention that had emerged between the two congregations. The first concern

Continued on page 28
Disciples History and Lexington Theological Seminary are pleased to announce a new partnership on preserving the historic records and archival materials of our first seminary. A portion of The Lexington Collection has been moved into its own private suite at the Thomas W. Phillips Memorial Archives in Nashville, Tennessee. Contact either president for further information.

Congratulations to the First churches of Madison, Santa Fe, and Hannibal, Missouri - all celebrating their 175th anniversaries.

Rev. Trayce L. Stewart (center) pictured here with Dr. Bill Edwards of the Ohio Region and President Carson was honored with the 2013 Fred Craddock Award for Excellence in Preaching at the General Assembly in Orlando. The award is given biennially by Disciples History and the Craddock Center.

The National Benevolent Association in St. Louis (nbacares.org) is launching a new initiative focused on leadership development and faith formation for young adults. The program emphasizes community service and vocational discernment.
J. Caleb Clanton of Lipscomb University has released *The Philosophy of Religion of Alexander Campbell* (University of Tennessee Press, 2013). Rubel Shelly, president of Rochester College, says that Clanton has “performed a distinctive service to all of us who are interested in Campbell.”

The charity golf tournament co-sponsored by Disciples History and Disciples Men at the Orlando General Assembly defined “a good time was had by all.” The proceeds of the tournament have been forwarded to Disciples Home Missions for use at their four historic children’s homes. The second biennial event is already being planned for 2015 in Columbus, Ohio.

The 19th Global Gathering of Stone-Campbell Christians will be August 14-17, 2016 in Seoul, Korea. Sponsored by World Convention and Global Women Connecting, the gathering will be built on the theme of “Peace on this Earth.” Go to www.WorldConvention.org for further information.
The current issue (#106) of the magazine from the Christian History Institute features stories about the Stone-Campbell tradition. Learn more at www.christianhistoryinstitute.org.

The Christian Youth Fellowship is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year. Since its founding at the 1938 International Convention, CYF has provided discipleship and leadership training for high school age youth and has been a proving ground for many young people called into ministry.

Disciples History partnered with the Cane Ridge Meeting House to bring the heart of Kentucky to the General Assembly in Florida. When delegates to the assembly arrived in Orlando this past July, they were greeted with a beautiful model of the interior of the Meeting House. Reverend Francisco Rivera of the Tennessee region designed the model and supervised its erection in the Orlando exhibit hall.
Retirement is a good word for Elizabeth and Gene Regen. They now have the time to do all the things they really enjoy. From the choir at Woodmont Christian Church to the Board of Disciples Divinity House at Vanderbilt, Gene remains highly active. And, as a physician, he brings a unique perspective to his work with the Baptist Healing Trust.

In addition to her involvement at Woodmont, Elizabeth is busy on the home front—especially since the Regen's grandchildren live in three different states. The whole family recently joined Elizabeth and Gene in the North Carolina mountains to celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary.

Elizabeth fondly remembers her time as a Board member for Disciples History. "It is so rewarding to point people in the direction of the Society for information and research," she says. And it is rewarding for the Society to have members like the Regens.
The primary Mercersburg theologians were John Williamson Nevin (1803-1886), a theologian, and Philip Schaff (1819-1893), a church historian. Nevin grew up as an Old School Presbyterian and trained for ministry and teaching at Princeton Theological Seminary. After a decade of teaching at Western Theological Seminary (now Pittsburgh Theological Seminary), he received an invitation to teach in Mercersburg in 1839.

Schaff was Swiss by birth, but educated at German universities in Tübingen, Halle, and Berlin. Schaff was instructed in Swabian pietism and while in Germany was a member of the United Evangelical Church of Prussia. At age 25, Schaff immigrated to the United States and in 1843 received an appointment to teach at the Mercersburg seminary. When Schaff arrived, Nevin was both president at Marshall College and the only professor at the seminary. Schaff taught in German while Nevin taught in English.
Nevin and Schaff discovered they had, in the words of James Hastings Nichols, "come quite independently to share a distinctive theological orientation, and their collaboration in its development produced the Mercersburg theology." The pair quickly began collaborating in teaching, books, tracts, and articles in *The Weekly Messenger*, *The Mercersburg Review*, and *Kirchenfreund*, which continued until Nevin's retirement and the merger of Marshall College with Franklin College in Lancaster, PA to form Franklin & Marshall College, in 1853.

Their theology was typified by a "high-church or catholicizing tendency within the framework of German idealism and historical thought," similar to the neo-Lutheran confessionalism and Anglo-Catholicism of their time. Their catholicizing tendency led them to an interest in the order of the church, a focus on tradition as a means of continuity, a sacramental emphasis, and an acceptance of the Christian faith of not only other Protestants, but also the Roman and Eastern traditions.

Any faith group, then, that those in Mercersburg considered to be against tradition came in the crosshairs. For example, in his *Antichrist and the Sect*, Nevin criticizes the sectarianism he perceives within both the Stone and Campbell churches. In a critique of divided Baptist and Congregational Christians who seek to follow the "Bible alone," Nevin mentions the "Christians," who "reject all party names to follow Christ, [and] take the Bible for their guide ... of shaping their faith." Nevin goes on to mention Alexander Campbell and his "Disciples of Christ" or "Campbellite Baptists," who seek "to reconstruct the Church" by distancing the revelation of God from "human creeds, confessions of faith, and for-
malities of doctrine and church government, as being not only unnecessary, but really a means of perpetuating division.”

However, Nevin notes that despite what he perceives as weaknesses in the sects, there is an understanding within some that the church is “one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.” An understanding of the church that Nevin would have appreciated can be seen in Proposition One of Thomas Campbell’s Declaration and Address:

That the Church of Christ upon earth is essentially, intentionally, and constitutionally one; consisting of all those in every place that profess their faith in Christ and obedience to him in all things according to the Scriptures, and that manifest the same by their tempers and conduct, and of none else; as none else can be truly and properly called Christians.

Nevin, though, had rather mixed feelings on Alexander Campbell: “So we meet in Mr. Campbell many traces of a sound and right feeling, which we may regret to find overwhelmed again, and made of no effect, by the power of the unhistorical sect mind which is allowed after all to prevail in his system.”

There is no evidence that any early Stone-Campbell leaders were aware of, or responded to, the critiques of the Mercersburg theologians. Schaff and Nevin were, however, at times referenced in the pages of the Millennial Harbinger as examples of contemporary figures from pedobaptist traditions who affirmed that the early church practiced baptism by immersion or had a plurality of elders.

From Mercersburg, then, comes a reminder that a goal of unity within the Church is still an ideal worth striving for, along with an openness to the genuineness and integrity of all faith traditions.

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Shaun Brown is on the ministry staff of Central Holston Christian Church in Bristol, Tennessee
Historians are defined as historians not by the kind or location of their work or by the audiences they address but rather by holding themselves out as people who seek to know what happened in the past and why it did so and then to present that knowledge to others in the formats—whether articles, books, films, radio transmissions, Web sites, or museum exhibits—of their choice. Historical knowledge is the coinage of their authority. Thus people with little proven competence as researchers or teachers but great love and knowledge of history—amateur historians who dedicate their labors to uncovering and teaching about the past without professional training or even compensation for their work—are historians, even if not trained to be or serving as professional historians. They participate in the same community of thought, in the same parent discipline, as academic and public historians do. Because they dedicate their labors to the same ends, they are entitled to bear the title of historian.

—James M. Banner, Jr., Being a Historian, Cambridge University Press, 2012
"Disciples, your time is now. God's goodness is wide enough, great enough, powerful enough to welcome everyone and anyone."

— R. Glen Miles, at the 2013 General Assembly in Orlando.

Dr. Miles is the senior minister of Country Club Christian Church in Kansas City and is the Moderator of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) 2013-15.
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Bess White Cochran was the editor of World Call from 1929 to 1932 and was interviewed by Disciples History president Willis Jones in the spring of 1969.
Recently I began a five week study of the First Christian Church of Duncan, Oklahoma. That sounds pretty dull. Not many care to know much about one more county seat church. I do because I'm its pastor. Others who care include our newcomers and they were there. Actually, it's an intriguing story of the commitment of those saints in 1901 (six years before Indian Territory became part of the state of Oklahoma, and seventeen years before oil came to town). Still, it might have been pretty dry stuff had I not been able to put the congregation's story in the context of what was going on among Stone-Campbell churches at the time—a period I spent researching at Disciples of Christ Historical Society. Other resources of the Society, printed and online, helped a lot. I'm so grateful for the Society and the ministry it provides us all.

Arnold Nelson, Jr.
Disciples History Board Chairman

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was that the Sycamore Street Church accepted people to the Lord's Table who had been excluded from the Enon Church for “uniting with those who are unbaptized and embodying themselves on the principle of what is sometimes called open communion.” For all “regular Baptist Churches,” they argued, “baptism is a prerequisite to communion at the table of the Lord’s.” The second issue revolved around the Sycamore Street Church’s inclusion of “an individual who formerly served as a pastor of a Baptist Church” to participation at the Lord’s Table. The erstwhile clergyman’s failure to unite with another “regular Baptist Church,” the Enon contingency insisted, precludes him from partaking of the elements of the Lord’s Supper. In conclusion, the Enon Baptists announced an end to Christian fellowship between the two churches unless the practices cited in their correspondence are immediately rectified.34

Isaac Burnet’s committee was again assigned the task of answering the Enon Church’s dispatch. In a lengthy rejoinder, the Sycamore Church members tried once more to resolve the charges levied against them. “We desire peace and we desire fellowship ... with you,” their letter explained, “... but we perceive in your complaint an attack upon the independence of the church, which we must resist unless we are prepared to acknowledge your infallibility. This we cannot do.” The Sycamore Church’s apology also defended the congregation’s prerogative to invite both the Enon Church’s castoffs and a lapsed Baptist pastor to full participation in the Lord’s Supper. Yet, the most intense aspect of their communication focused on the Enon Church’s insistence that baptism be a prerequisite to partaking of the communion. The belief that immersion must precede participation in the Lord’s Supper, Burnet’s group argued, makes baptism “as indispensable as faith to the salvation of the sinner.” The Sycamore committee’s rejection of this Baptist tradition was heightened when they exclaimed, “We cannot discover in God’s word any such obligation on all believers.” As a result, the leadership of the Sycamore Street Church refused—at least for the time being—to make baptism a requirement for salvation or admission to the Lord’s Table.35

Though the Sycamore Street Church’s stance on baptism in 1829 did not parallel the views that the Disciples would ultimately espouse (or those that the Sycamore Street Church itself would soon embrace),36 this correspondence did more to nudge the reform-minded Baptists closer to the ideas of Alexander Campbell than most other events in the congregation’s history. The strife between the Sycamore Church and the Enon Church did not end with their epistolary exchanges and
any hope for making amends was nonexistent. In early 1830, the Enon Church refused to grant a transferal letter to a member who sought to gain admission into the Sycamore Street Church. The rationale for this decision, they explained, is that they no longer deemed the Sycamore Church “to be of their faith and order.”37 Thus, the congregation that originally brought the Sycamore Street Church into existence was now driving a wedge between the young church and the other Baptists of Cincinnati.

The Sycamore Street Church’s retreat from the Baptists did not occur suddenly. Over a period of time, however, the congregation withdrew from the Duck Creek Association of Baptist Churches38 and gradually changed their identity. They continued to regard themselves as the “Sycamore Street Baptist Church” for a number of years, but were often referred to by others as the “Campbellite Baptist Church” or the “First Christian Baptist Church.”39 By June of 1831, the congregation’s members were being referred to as “disciples,”40 and nearly one year after that the church minutes report the first reference to “the Church of Christ meeting on Sycamore Street.”41 From this point forward, the moniker of “Baptist” was rarely used in the church’s records.42 Perhaps the final blow the congregation’s Baptist heritage came in 1839 when John Waggoner requested and received permission to “erase” the words “Baptist Church” from the keystone in the front of the building.43

The Sycamore Street Church survived in Cincinnati until 1845, when the congregation sold their building to the Methodist Episcopal Church and relocated to the corner of Eighth and Walnut Streets in 1846.44 In Cincinnati, the Disciples went on to develop a Bible Society, missionary organizations, publishing companies, educational institutions, and a multitude of churches.45 But it all had its origin in the offshoot of a Baptist Church that evolved into Cincinnati’s first Disciples of Christ congregation.

Richard J. Cherok, Ph.D. is Professor of Church History at Cincinnati Christian University and a Board member for Disciples History.
Endnotes


2 United States Census Bureau, www.census.gov/history.

3 The minutes for the Sycamore Street Church of Cincinnati suggests a commonly held belief that Campbell intended to abandon his home in Bethany to relocate to Cincinnati in the late 1820s. See "Minutes of the Central Christian Church," October 26, 1837, Cincinnati Historical Society, Cincinnati, Ohio.


10 Henry A. Ford and Kate B. Ford, History of Cincinnati, Ohio, with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches (Cleveland: L. A. Williams & Co., 1881), 538-59.

11 Ford and Ford, History of Cincinnati, 159. See also, "Extract of a letter, dated Cincinnati, Ohio, Feb. 17, 1822," The Latter Day Luminary, April 1822.


14 Boyd surrendered his pastoral role in March 1825, only a few months after the reform ideas of Campbell were introduced to the Enon Church. See Ford and Ford, History of Cincinnati, 159. One must wonder whether Boyd's departure from the Enon Church was related to the introduction of Campbell's reform ideas. Goss reports that Boyd formed the Bethel Baptist Church after leaving Enon, but that the church quickly dissolved. See Charles Frederic Goss, Cincinnati: The Queen City, 1788-1912 (Chicago and Cincinnati: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1912), 1497.

15 Fishback later objected to some of Stone's theological positions, but endorsed the reform ideas of Alexander Campbell. For additional information on Fishback, see Willis Miller Kemper, Genealogy of the Fishback Family in America (New York: Thomas Madison Taylor, 1914), 114-118 and J. H. Spencer, A History of Kentucky Baptists, from 1769-1885 (Cincinnati: J. R. Baumes, 1885), 228-30.


18 Richardson, Memoirs of Alexander Campbell, 2:72-73, 120. Upon hearing the news of Vardeman's abandoation of the Disciples, Campbell remarked, "I knew him well, and if I had been in Kentucky at the time, Jeremiah Vardeman would never have been persuaded to abandon the cause of the Reformation." See Richardson, Memoirs, 2:325-26. For additional information on Vardeman, see Spencer, A History of Kentucky Baptists, 1:232-240.


20 Minutes of the Central Christian Church," October 27, 1828. While the church minutes ambiguously record that "about one hundred and twenty" set off to establish the new church, variant numbers are provided from other sources. Ford and Ford state that "a colony of one hundred and eighteen was sent off to form the Sycamore street church." See Ford and Ford, History of Cincinnati, 159. Leonard, however, contends that "letters were granted to about a hundred and fifty persons" for the founding of the new church. See Lewis Alexander Leonard, Greater Cincinnati and Its People: A History, (New York, Chicago, and Cincinnati: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1927), 2:416.

21 Keith, The Story of D. S. Burnet, 35.

22 Minutes of the Central Christian Church," October 31, 1828. The congregation unanimously voted to accept Challen as their pastor on December 23, 1828, and Challen accepted their call on December 31, 1828.

23 Minutes of the Central Christian Church," November 13, 1828.


26 Minutes of the Central Christian Church," November 28, 1828. Sarah was later expelled from the church "for the crime of adultery." See "Minutes of the Central Christian Church," January 29, 1830.

27 Minutes of the Central Christian Church," June 9, 1829. Burnet mysteriously requested "letters of dismissal for himself and family" on December 25, 1831. The surprised church leaders twice refused to give such letters, but his name was eventually "stricken from the Church Book" on March 10, 1833. See "Minutes of the Central Christian Church," December 25, 1831, September 23, 1832, September 30, 1832,
and March 10, 1833.

The first recorded reference to the "Meeting House on Sycamore Street" is in the church minutes for Tuesday, October 6, 1829, but the structure may have been in use before this meeting. See "Minutes of the Central Christian Church," October 6, 1829. A former member of the congregation recalled that the basement of the church was occupied prior to the completion of the main floor of the building. See T., "The Old Cooper Shop," Christian Standard, April 23, 1870.

This group did not actually begin meeting on Sycamore Street for several more months, but for the sake of clarity they will be referred to from this point forward as the Sycamore Street Church.

The precise occasion for the Sycamore Street Church's acceptance of immersion as an element of salvation cannot be discerned from the church records, but it was probably during the ministry of Walter Scott in late 1831. By 1837, a notation in the minutes states, "three persons accepted the invitation and were, according to the ancient practice, forthwith (straightway) baptized, and were the same day added to the Disciples." See "Minutes of the Central Christian Church," February 5, 1837.

Minutes of the Central Christian Church," January 5, 1830.


For an example, see "Minutes of the Central Christian Church," October 22, 1837.

For an example, see "Minutes of the Central Christian Church," October 2, 1843.


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Endnotes for Just North of the Mason-Dixon: The Mercersburg Critique of Stone-Campbell Churches


2 Ibid., 3.

3 Ibid., 9.

4 Ibid., 11.

5 Nevin does not refer to Barton W. Stone by name, but implies Stone's churches are among the "Christians."


7 Ibid., 97.


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*Darius Rucker
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