

elders or overseers care for the spiritual needs of the church. Most churches also appoint a board of deacons who serve the practical needs of the congregation and the needy community beyond.

Each local Bible Fellowship Church is autonomous, but not independent. The collective Bible Fellowship Church is gov-



erned through the Conference (an annual assembly of elders and pastors representing each church), which oversees the doctrine of the church, controls the ordination of its pastors, and directs its corporate witness through elected boards and committees.

The Bible Fellowship Church oversees the Board of Church Extension, the Board of Missions, Pinebrook Bible Conference (a family camp and retreat center), and Victory Valley Camp (a children's camp).

## The Future

The Bible Fellowship Church seeks to become "an expanding fellowship of churches united to make disciples of Jesus Christ." This simple phrase emphasizes our commitment

to church growth. Each local church along with our outreach departments are actively engaged in the proclamation of the gospel.

Every effort is being given to maintaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace within the Bible Fellowship Church. Our desire is equally about spiritual depth. Our endeavor is to make disciples of all the nations, striving to bring every member to maturity in Christ.



Each Sunday, some ten thousand people gather in the worship of the Lord across the Bible Fellowship Church. We invite you to become a part of the Bible Fellowship Church and join us in serving the Lord Jesus Christ until He comes.

Historical photos inside, top, are William H. Stutzman a member of the Gospel Herald Society, photo taken around 1900, and the congregation at Bethlehem, also taken about 1900. The pastor was R. L. Woodring.

# Introducing Bible Fellowship Church



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Bible  
Fellowship  
Church

"An Expanding Fellowship of Churches  
United to Make Disciples of Jesus Christ"





# “An Expanding Fellowship of Churches United to Make Disciples of Jesus Christ”

## A Rich Heritage

The Bible Fellowship Church is a group of about 65 churches centered in the Mid-Atlantic States. Our roots are in the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition of the 16th Century Reformation. We maintain a strong, basic conviction that the local church is a group of believers in Jesus Christ set apart by the act of baptism. For this once revolutionary view of the church as a community of true Christians, our forefathers suffered and died. We hold true to this belief today.

1913 Annual Conference



After coming to America in 1683, the Mennonites began to settle in eastern Pennsylvania. In 1858, the Evangelical Mennonite Society left the Mennonite Church, coming into existence in Zionsville, PA. God used just seven men to form this new fellowship. The issue that brought about the new movement was their commitment to revival and outreach. Of this group, one of the early leaders, Eusebius Hershey, became the first foreign missionary of American Mennonite background.

Eusebius Hershey



This early emphasis on evangelism and missions continues today in the Bible Fellowship Church through local church evangelism, Church Extension, and the Board of Missions. Our fellowship of churches is aggressively committed to planting new congrega-

tions in the United States.

In foreign missions, the Bible Fellowship Church has one of the highest missionary-to-member ratios among American churches.

Today's Bible Fellowship Church came into existence in 1959 as a church body distinct from previous affiliations. It continues today with gratitude to the Lord for His faithfulness for more than 150 years of growth and development.

## A Biblical Faith

The preamble to the Faith and Order states that “the Bible Fellowship Church acknowledges as its sole head, Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Savior of man. It submits to the written Word of God and to the Holy Spirit as its only sources of guidance and power in maintaining its redemptive life and work in the world.”

The Bible Fellowship Church celebrates its unity with all those in every land who confess faith in the triune God of the Bible, who experience the New Birth through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, and who receive the Scriptures as the inerrant Word of God.

The Bible Fellowship Church gladly shares with all



Bible-believing Christians in the central, saving truths of the Gospel. However,

there are some issues addressed in Scripture over which such believers differ. The Bible Fellowship Church approaches such topics by asking the question: “What does the Bible teach?” Historically, we have changed our conclusions on several issues as we have studied the Scriptures more carefully.

In matters of salvation, the Bible Fellowship Church confesses the sovereignty of God as supreme without negating human responsibility, agreeing in this with the theology of the reformers Martin Luther and John Calvin. As stated before, we practice the immersion of the believer in water as the scriptural form of baptism and we believe in the premillennial return of Jesus Christ to earth at the end of the age.

## Leadership

The Bible Fellowship Church confesses Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church, and receives the New Testament pattern of local church leadership through elders. Each local church is led by a group of elders (including any pastors) who are identified by the congregation as scripturally qualified. These

