

## Some CGGC Black History--Vol. 9, No. 9--February 27, 2015

February is Black History month, so I thought I'd write a few lines this week about those in the Churches of God, General Conference (CGGC) who stood for justice and equality. From its inception the CGGC identified itself with the anti-slavery cause. In 1836 John Winebrenner (1797-1860) with two others organized a chapter of the American Anti-Slavery Society in Harrisburg, just six years after the Eldership formed. In 1845 the first General Eldership meeting in Pittsburgh declared "that the system of involuntary slavery, as it exists in the United States of North America, is a flagrant violation of the natural, unalienable and most precious rights of man, and is utterly inconsistent with the spirit, laws and profession of the Christian religion."



During the decades before the Civil War, CGGC leaders continued to make their anti-slavery positions clear. Opinions varied on how to resolve this "national disgrace" and the issues it generated as evidenced by letters and editorials published in The Church Advocate and its predecessor, The Gospel Publisher. Some expressed radical abolitionist viewpoints that led to the public burning of the Publisher in Richmond, VA in October 1838. Others, hoping to avoid a Civil War, looked for less radical solutions. Winebrenner even went bankrupt supporting and promoting the silk worm industry, believing it could dethrone "King Cotton" and undermine the financial incentive for slavery.

Every Eldership from Pennsylvania to Illinois went on record denouncing slavery and supporting black rights, but the opposition went beyond mere polemics. As reported previously in the eNews ([2009-5-8](#), [2010-9-17](#), and [2014-8-1](#)) some involved themselves in the Underground Railroad, while others paid huge prices for their activism. In Texas some were lynched or nearly hung by vigilantes for holding "northern sympathies." Elder George Sigler (1834-1915) ministered to John Brown before and after the infamous raid at Harper's Ferry. When the Civil War came, many CGGC men enlisted so America could become "One nation under God, with liberty and justice for all." Some died doing so, including Elder George Harn (1820-1862), a prominent minister from Wooster, Ohio.



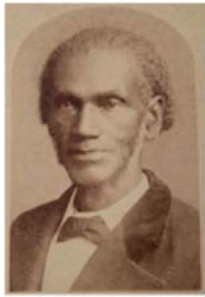
George Sigler



George Harn



Baptist (Church of God) Church building, Chambersburg, PA torched by General McCausland's soldiers on July 30, 1864



Perry Stanton

In 1844 the East Pennsylvania Eldership licensed Perry Stanton (d1889), identified by C.H. Forney (1839-1926) in his History of the Churches of God as “the first colored minister.” Two years later the Eldership appointed him to a mission in Carroll County, Maryland (a slave state). Perry Stanton ultimately settled in Newville, PA and worked with Winebrenner, Harn and others in the abolitionist cause becoming an accomplished orator in the process. Before the war he organized black congregations in Pennsylvania along the South Mountain, including Brownsville, Stony Point (Mainsville), and Brush Town (South Fairview). After the war he helped start works in Shippensburg, Newville, Carlisle, Mt Holly Springs, and Harrisburg and recruited the second generation African-American pastors.

His death at Newville in August of 1889 was much lamented. C.H. Forney wrote that “he was held in high esteem as a man, a Christian and a minister of the gospel. He was a man of fair abilities, and he had so improved his talents that he became a successful preacher of the word and a great power for good among his own race. For many years he has been the leading colored minister of the Church in the East, and we doubt not of the Church in general. The ministers of the Eldership always regarded and treated him as a brother – their equal and fellow laborer in the ministry. He has however now gone to the home of the righteous, where no distinctions are known on account of race or color. He will not soon be forgotten. His place will not be readily filled.” (Church Advocate: August 21, 1889)



C. H. Forney



C. H. Davis

The next generation of CGGC African-American leaders also deserves to be remembered, including C. H. Davis, Isaiah T. Brown (d1891), J. A. Brown, and J. W. Jones (d1908). The Browns were likely connected with the Brownsville congregation near Fayetteville, PA. In the early 1900s other black pastors were John Fuqua, Marshall Walker, Walter Ward, and Alfred J. Young (d1910).



Isaiah T. Brown



J. W. Jones



Alfred J. Young



Marshall Walker

Perhaps in future with a bit of research all their stories can be told. In 1910 the East Pennsylvania Eldership ordained William Joseph Winfield (1873-1956) who served the black CGGC congregations in PA until his death. His, too, is an interesting story. His father served



J. A. Brown



William Joseph Winfield

in the Lincoln White House and in the later 1800s became the lead elder in the Six Mile Run Church. Brother Winfield was one of the best educated ministers of his generation having graduated from Howard University in 1898 and receiving a degree in Sacred Theology from Lincoln University in 1907.

All these men served faithfully and their legacy is an encouragement to us all, whatever our ethnic background. As it says in Hebrews 11:38, "the world was not worthy of them." They were undoubtedly "destitute, persecuted and mistreated" for the sake of the gospel, yet they persevered. Great is their reward, and great is our blessing in the CGGC for we are all the beneficiaries of their service.

ONE Mission together,  
Ed  
Soli Deo Gloria!

---

## Register NOW for the CGWM Spring Retreat

It's almost here! For meals and early pricing, **register by March 1** for the CGWM Spring Women's Retreat online or print off a form at the [CGWM website](#).

Ladies, join us at this year's CGWM Women's Retreat! God's love has infinite height, depth, width and length! He has called us to seek His love above all else and share His love everywhere we go. Through the teaching, music, fellowship and unique experiences, we hope that you may come to know His love to the fullest and be able to better share that love with others.



Register at [www.WomenForGod.org](http://www.WomenForGod.org)  
or call Becca Shrom at (513) 478-5546  
Find us on Facebook: CGWMMarchRetreat

---

## WTS Presidential Search in Progress



With Dr. David Draper's approaching retirement, Winebrenner Theological Seminary, Findlay, Ohio is seeking its next President. Candidates should have an earned doctorate; organizational leadership and managerial skills; demonstrated ability to understand, articulate, and carry out fiscal, academic, and institutional responsibilities; a welcoming and affirming spirit for a broad range of theological perspectives while maintaining an evangelical position; an understanding of governance within theological education; the ability to communicate and network with a variety of constituencies; and the ability to support the school's mission, vision, core values and basic beliefs. Details will be posted at <http://www.winebrenner.edu>, and *curriculum vitae* may be sent to:

Winebrenner Theological Seminary Presidential Transition  
Edward L. Rosenberry, Search Committee Chair  
700 East Melrose Avenue  
P.O. Box 926  
Findlay, Ohio 45839  
OR  
[director@cggc.org](mailto:director@cggc.org)

---

## MAN-UP! Conference Coming to Scotland Campus

A promotional poster for the "MAN-UP! Conference for Christian Men" at Scotland Campus. The poster features a central graphic of a man in a suit. Text on the poster includes: "Scotland Campus", "Christian Men, it is Time!", "MAN-UP!" in large red letters, "Conference for Christian Men", "March 20<sup>th</sup>, Friday -Saturday", "Registration 7:00PM", "Ends Saturday at 2:30", "Key Note Speaker: Ron Hostetler", "Penn State/LA Rams/Speaker/Author", "Comedy: David Dean", "Band: Next2Nothing", "Call 552-2220", "for more details, register and get your room assignment.", and "\$75.00/pp includes event, meals, room." The background of the poster has a faint watermark that reads "Where Faith Comes to Life".

Scotland Campus  
Christian Men, it is Time!  
**MAN-UP!**  
Conference for Christian Men  
March 20<sup>th</sup>, Friday -Saturday  
Registration 7:00PM  
Ends Saturday at 2:30  
Key Note Speaker: Ron Hostetler  
*Penn State/LA Rams/Speaker/Author*  
Comedy: David Dean  
Band: Next2Nothing  
Call 552-2220  
for more details, register and get  
your room assignment.  
\$75.00/pp includes event, meals,  
room.