

Letters from Russia

Philipp Schaaf of Harvard, Nebraska sends us the following letter for publication:

Huck, 10 July.---My dear Brother Philipp and sister Christina Schaaf and children:
---Your letter of 12 March I received on the 20th of April, but this is the first chance I have had to answer it as it is the case that we are short of money and rarely have enough to buy even a postcard.

Pass my greetings on to everyone.

The Versammlung (Meeting) read your letter and they thank you heartily send everyone their greetings. The words about the city of Philadelphia (*Ed. Note: probably the city motto*): "I have for you an open door," are still said here today during grace as thanks to the son of our Great God who spread the word of the Lord.

On the 6th of April we celebrated at Versammlung (Meeting) the joining of the following people:

Men:

1. Johannes Bohl, Scheppe;
2. Georg Huck, the son of the old "Machine Hat"
3. Georg Schwabauer, son of Peter
4. Johannes Frick, son of Ph. A. R.;
5. Jacob Bohl, son of Gephards Bohl;
6. Georg Bohl, The old Scheppe Hannes' son;
7. Jacob Schwabauer, sister Bette's daughter's husband;
8. Johannes Eckert, our Evlis. husband's son.

Women:

1. Catharin Maria Köhler, widow of Philipp,
2. Cath. Marg. Schwabauer, daughter of sister Bette;
3. Elisabet Boh., Scheppe;
4. Anna Marg. Michel, daughter-in-law of brother G. Ph.;
5. Cath. Elis. Michel, brother Hanneschen's (*Little Hannes'*) wife;
6. Charlotte Schleich, brother Jacob's wife;
7. Anna Marg. Bohl, brother Oswald's wife;
8. Elis. Eckart, wife of the aforementioned Johannes;
9. Anna Marg. Hampel, widow of Peter Hampel;
10. Maria Cath. Schuldeis, wife of Lorenz;
11. Elis. Schneider, daughter of G. Eckert across from our old farm;
12. Eva Elis. Frick, daughter of brother Joh. Huck;
13. Anna Marg. Huck, wife of the aforementioned Georg;
14. Anna Maria Bohl, wife of brother Joh. Jaschkes, above our old farm;
15. Maria Michel, the unmarried daughter of my sister Amalia;
16. Maria Cath. Bohl, the unmarried sister of Joh. Bohl.

In total: 24 members.

Our Versammlung (Meeting) now stands at 26 new brethren and 22 as yet not accepted brethren. Also 48 associate members who are men and 50 who are women and another 34 women not yet accepted as associate members, altogether 84. Also in the area are another 132 accepted and registered members, besides these there are others who attend. We will prepare a follow-up report in the fall.

We have received high praise about our Versammlung (Meeting). In many other Versammlungen (*other Meeting congregations*) there were likewise members joining in the early part of the year. Our membership celebrated the following brethren:

G. Hirt, main text Eph. 2, 19--22,
G. Schneider, 1. Tim, 6, 11--16,
Casper Weissgerber 1. Joh. 3, 1--3;
Conr. Huck, 2. Tim, 1 Tim. 6--12.

I framed everthing together with L. 4, 12 and brother Jacob Neu spoke about the spreading of gossip.

The Versammlung (Meeting) movement among us has grown faster than I thought would be possible, even in the summertime we have evening Versammlung (Meeting) for the whole of the village, one time in Oberdorf and another time in Unterdorf. They are held in farmsteads and there is never enough seating.

--We have digressed enough.

God's hand is once again stretched over us. We have had a complete crop failure. Since the snow has gone there has not been one day of rain. It is terribly hot. Wind and searing gusts have bent growth to the ground. If it doesn't rain soon we will also have no vegetable. It perhaps occurs as it was written in Jeremiah chapter 14 and 15. The world began to grumble and curse at the brethren, why do they pray, it helps them not? Yea, truly, there is no more help when the penalty over us is imprisonment. Then there is also misfortune in the city, about which the Lord does not know.-- Yes, dear ones, it is difficult for us but we are steadfast and trust in the word of God. Psalm 110, 92.

From our last text you can see the state of our faith and belief. At the last Versammlung (Meeting) the following texts were used to lay the basis for the Versammlungen (Meetings): Klag., Jer. 3, 22; Psalm 78, 23; 2. Moses 14, 13--14; Cor, 10, 34--39 and 2, Cor. 5, 1--7. Our Motto is and shall remain through the strength and Son of the Great God, Römer (*Romans*) 8, 28--39.

Brother Johannes has already recovered from two strokes. His health is such that although he attends church and Versammlungen (Meetings) regularly, he can no longer work. His memory is failing and is such that he doesn't sit on the right anymore. (*Ed. Note: In German Lutheran churches the men sat on the right side of the church and women on the left*).

His wife is sickly as well. He begs passionately for help. Oswald and Catchen wanted to live with them but it didn't work out. I don't have an answer for the problem.

--Schw. Anna Margarete is doing poorly. Yes, when we are put into the earth we are altogether poor. Still, the love of God enfolds all in its grace!

Heartfelt greetings from me and my wife and father-in-law to your and yours in Christ, dear brother.

Ph. Kindsvater