

PART TWO  
**Diversity**

Chapter 7

**PHILIP WILLIAM OTTERBEIN AND THE UNITED  
BRETHREN**

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**DISCIPLESHIP REQUIRES MORE** than “book” knowledge of the Christian faith. Although Christians in all times have agreed, in mid-eighteenth-century America people were especially agitated about the relationship of “experience” to their salvation. When a respected, scholarly pastor in the German Reformed community, Philip William Otterbein, announced that cognitive Christianity was deficient, he caused a stir. Otterbein declared:

The question is not whether one has heard or learned something about Christ and his death, or whether one can talk about it, but whether one has experienced the death of Jesus Christ in the putting to death and riddance of the old man [woman]. . . . Consequently, if these things are yet strange to you, then your Christianity is merely appearance, imagination, shadow tricks.(1)

The candor and conviction of this graduate of Herborn Seminary, Nassau, Germany, who was devoted to the teachings of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, led his pious mother to say of his ministry, “My William will have to be a missionary; he is so frank, so open, so natural, so prophet-like.”(2)

**NURTURED IN GERMAN PIETISM**

William and his twin sister, Anna Margaret, were born on June 3, 1726, in the town of Dillenberg, Germany. They were the fourth and fifth children of the seven sons and three daughters born to John Daniel and Wilhelmina Henrietta (Hoerlen) Otterbein. William’s twin and one other sister died in infancy. One brother died at age twelve. William’s grandfather, uncle, father, and five surviving brothers were all ordained ministers of the German Reformed Church. His surviving sister married a pastor, and four of his oldest brother’s sons also entered the ordained ministry of the German Reformed Church.(3)

When John Daniel Otterbein died in 1742, Wilhelmina was concerned for her children’s education and moved the family to Herborn. A theology school had been established there in 1584 by Count Johann VI of Nassau-Dillenberg. Its founding faculty included Caspar Olevianus, who, with Zacharias Ursinus of Heidelberg University, was a co-author of the *Heidelberg Catechism*. In recognition of Wilhelmina’s commitment to the education of her children, the Herborn faculty

issued an official commendation in her honor.(4)

When the Otterbein brothers attended Herborn Seminary, it stood firmly within the Cocceian pietistic tradition that had been introduced in the 1670s.(5) According to this “Federal Theology,” and in contrast to the predestinarian theology of John Calvin, human beings can make faith decisions in a manner that emphasizes freedom of will. “What God offers and what Christians need is an interiorly experienced faith relation which permits God to release his power in the continuing transformation of the believer’s life.”(6) Professors Arnoldi and Schramm, two of Philip William Otterbein’s teachers, upheld federal theology. At Herborn Seminary their pietism was so congenial and ecumenical that the school’s press published the popular Mennonite tract *Geistliches Lustgartlein* in 1787.(7)

Otterbein graduated from Herborn Seminary in 1748. He served as a private tutor until he received a call to serve as vicar of Ockersdorf in 1749. He was ordained June 13, 1749, and quickly introduced in his first parish some of the pietistic devotional practices taught at Herborn.

## THE CALL TO AMERICA

Soon thereafter Otterbein responded to the appeal of Michael Schlatter, on behalf of the Synods of North and South Holland, for missionaries among German-speaking settlers in America. After satisfactorily completing the customary examinations at the Hague, Otterbein and five others set sail on April 15, 1752, reaching New York on July 27, 1752. The next day, in a gesture that demonstrates the ecumenical spirit of the time, Schlatter and the six missionaries met with Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, “the eminent pioneer missionary of the Lutheran Church.” He greeted them with the words of Jesus: “Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves.”(8)

These ominous words of welcome reflect the spiritual situation of the time. Although the religious enthusiasm of the Great Awakening reached its full flower in the 1730s and 1740s, its influence had begun to wane by mid-century. Otterbein and his missionary colleagues faced a period of decline in the religious commitment of the diverse population. During the struggle for American independence and the Revolutionary War, “only about five percent (one in twenty) of the colonial population openly professed religious faith or admitted church relationship.”(9)

As Otterbein began his ministry in Pennsylvania, the Coetus, under whose direction he labored and in whose ranks he held membership, was responsible to the Classis of Amsterdam and the Synods of North and South Holland. This arrangement continued until 1794, when the German Reformed Coetus of Pennsylvania became an independent synod. During this period of subordination to the Reformed Church in Holland, there were occasional disagreements between church authorities in Europe and the Coetus of Pennsylvania. The contention usually involved the proper authorization of ordination because the needs of the church in the colonial setting did not always correspond to established practices. On one occasion, in 1773, the Coetus apologized for proceeding with the ordination of several “preachers” before approval had arrived from Holland. The Coetus confessed: “All this was done before we received your fatherly warnings. From these we now learn that we acted hastily, and hereby ask, hoping for a favorable answer, your pardon of this hasty action by Coetus.”(10)

The internal spiritual life of the Reformed Church reflected the general religious malaise of the time. A century after Otterbein’s arrival in Pennsylvania, John Williamson Nevin looked back at

the last half of the eighteenth century and lamented Otterbein's role in the founding of a new sect. However, Nevin added, "he was a good man who seems to have been driven into a false position by the cold, dead temper that he found generally prevalent in the regular church."(11)

## **LANCASTER AND THE RULES OF ORDER**

Otterbein began his American ministry at Lancaster (1752- 57). There he responded to the nominal Christianity of the day by insisting that "Rules of Order" be adopted by the congregation. This was deemed necessary to correct irregularities in the life of the parish and to ascertain "who they are that acknowledge themselves to be members of our church."(12) The Rules of Order introduced into the Lancaster Church pietistic practices similar to those that Otterbein had instituted at Ockersdorf. One of these practices was the expectation that each member have a private interview with the pastor before receiving the sacrament of Holy Communion. This practice was not alien to the German Reformed Church. In retrospect, church historians valued it highly: "Pity that the good custom has been suffered to sink out of sight. Its abandonment brought no blessing to the church at Lancaster."(13)

During his pastorate at Lancaster, Otterbein also underwent an experience akin to John Wesley's "special warming of the heart." Many years later when Francis Asbury, a well-known Methodist leader, asked, "By what means were you brought to the gospel of our God and Savior?" Otterbein responded, "By degrees was I brought to the knowledge of the truth, while I was at Lancaster."(14) This led Asbury to remember Otterbein as one who "had been sixty years a minister, fifty years a converted one."(15)

## **FRIENDSHIP WITH MARTIN BOEHM**

Otterbein left the Lancaster Church in 1758, apparently disillusioned that the congregation did not achieve the spiritual growth he had envisioned. He intended to return to Germany that year but was prevented by the turmoil of the French and Indian War in America and the Seven Years' War in Europe. He agreed to supply the church at Tulpehocken, where he continued his emphasis on the personal experience of salvation.

In 1760 Otterbein accepted a call to the church at Frederick, Maryland. It was here that his pietistic zeal led to what has been called a "lock out." Otterbein was barred from preaching in the church and began to conduct the service from the cemetery. The morning ended happily, however, when the majority relented and the key-holder opened the door.(16)

While at Frederick, on April 19, 1762, Otterbein married Susan LeRoy, a woman of French Huguenot background. The marriage was short, however, owing to her death in 1768 at the age of thirty-two. They had no children and Otterbein never remarried.

Otterbein accepted a call to the church in York in 1765. Soon thereafter, probably on Pentecost Sunday in 1767, he attended a preaching assembly or "great meeting" at Isaac Long's barn northeast of Lancaster. After hearing a sermon by the Mennonite preacher Martin Boehm, Otterbein embraced him, greeting him with the words "We are brethren."(17) The close association between these two ministers led to the movement eventually called the United Brethren.

In April of 1770 Otterbein returned to Germany for a visit with his family. In Germany he told

others about his experience at Lancaster and his renewed ministry. Georg Gottfried Otterbein, known in Germany for his pietistic interpretation of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, responded, "My dear William, we are now, blessed by the same Lord, not only brothers after the flesh, but also after the spirit. I also have experienced the same blessing."(18) Otterbein returned to York on October 1, 1771, continuing his ministry there until 1774.

## BALTIMORE

In 1774 Otterbein received a call to the German Reformed Church in Baltimore, a church deeply troubled with division. Although the Coetus made every attempt to reconcile the parties in the congregation, all efforts failed. A minority faction had built a separate house of worship on Conway Street. They were served for a time by a Pastor Swope, who had recently come from Germany. Otterbein was originally invited to succeed him in 1772, but the Coetus disapproved. However, the new congregation persisted. Francis Asbury also urged Otterbein to accept the call. Finally, in 1774, Otterbein became pastor of the Conway Street church. Later he wrote to the church in Holland: "Finally, I consented because of their many solicitations, yet with the condition that the Coetus would give its approval."(19) In 1775 the Coetus reluctantly blessed the call with the words, "Coetus after mature deliberation deems it advisable for Dom. Otterbein to continue his ministry in the congregation at Baltimore. It appears from the report that his labours are blessed and the opposing party is becoming quiet.(20)

Although the spirit of the new congregation from the outset was independent, it strains the evidence to claim, as a United Brethren historian does, that "in the year 1774, . . . we find William Otterbein in the city of Baltimore, organizing a Church, separate and apart, in doctrine and disciplinary rules from the German Reformed Church."(21) Nevertheless, rebellion was evident. The manner in which the new church held its property, its reluctance to send delegates to the Coetus, its participation in the emerging pattern of "class" meetings in which the United Brethren and others shared, its strong insistence on the personal experience of salvation, and its provision for "preachers" to share in a ministry to other churches under the "superintendency" of William Otterbein were indicative of a local church that in some measure began to take on the features of a seminal local denomination.(22) After examining "The Constitution and Ordinances of the Evangelical Church of Baltimore," it has been argued that "the articles are not only complete in themselves, but they present, in discipline, doctrine, methods, and spirit the antithesis of features belonging to the Reformed Church."(23)

Otterbein, however, tried to remain faithful to the church of his heritage while at the same time responding in innovative ways to the spiritual needs of the people. In 1784 the Coetus belatedly recognized both congregations in Baltimore as separate churches with standing in the German Reformed Church.

In the same year that Otterbein went to Baltimore, the Pipe Creek meetings of the various classes in the United Brethren movement began to meet regularly and keep minutes. However, the rural and small classes of the Pipe Creek region looked on the classes in Otterbein's Baltimore church with some suspicion, indicating on one occasion that "those at Baltimore are at peace; but it is to be feared and guarded against, that with their good order and regular meetings they do not take the appearance for the reality."(24)

## LIVING BETWEEN CHURCH AND MOVEMENT

From 1774 until his death in 1813, Otterbein attended many meetings of the Coetus and participated fully in gatherings of the United Brethren. During this time he also became a friend of Francis Asbury, sharing in his consecration as bishop of the Methodist Church in 1784. Otterbein, however, resisted overtures to introduce Methodist polity into the United Brethren movement, even after it was meeting in official Annual Conferences after 1800. Asbury praised him for his learning and piety but expressed disappointment that the United Brethren did not organize along Methodist lines. Asbury remarked one year before Otterbein's death:

I pause here to indulge in reflections upon the past. Why was the German Reformation in the middle States, that sprang up with [Martin] Boehm, Otterbein and their helpers, not more perfect? . . . There was no master-spirit to rise up and organize and lead them. Some of the ministers located, and only added to their charge partial traveling labors; and all were independent. It remains to be proved whether a reformation, in any country, or under any circumstances, can be perpetuated without a well-directed itinerancy.<sup>25</sup>

It is important to remember that the very time when Asbury and the United Brethren were pressing for a new denomination, the Coetus of Pennsylvania was negotiating its independence from Holland. Autonomy was granted in 1794. The new status raised hopes in the German Reformed Church for a new chapter in its life, and Otterbein stood between two groups anticipating that new day. He provided leadership in the United Brethren movement with the understanding that it was an "unsectarian" endeavor.(26)

In fact, it was not long before the United Brethren began sounding in their gatherings very much like the Coetus with respect to matters of order and discipline. In 1789 the Coetus had reported to Holland that absenteeism was a problem. Otterbein was among the absent that year. The Coetus minutes read: "Since only a minority of the absent ministers had sent in excuses, it was resolved to require from these gentlemen, at next Coetus, a strict account of their conduct. Especially the excuse about serving other congregations at the time of Coetus, was declared invalid."(27) The minutes of the Annual Conference of the United Brethren in 1801 discuss the same problem. Action was taken to require that for the next Annual Conference, "whoever of the preachers cannot come shall write to the conference."(28)

As Otterbein and Boehm aged, new leadership arose among the United Brethren. Christian Newcomer, a Mennonite in his youth, became one of the early second-generation superintendents or bishops of the United Brethren. Unlike Otterbein, who never left the Reformed Church, and Boehm, who was expelled from the Mennonite Church, Newcomer left the Mennonite Church by choice. His Journal is a rich source of material concerning the organization and practices of the United Brethren. As Otterbein neared the end of his life, he was urged by some of the United Brethren to ordain Christian Newcomer as an elder. When Newcomer visited him for the last time in October of 1813, Otterbein agreed to the request but added, "I have always considered myself too unworthy to perform this solemn injunction of the Apostle, but now I perceive the necessity of doing so, before I shall be removed."(29)

Newcomer did not object to ordination but asked that two of his colleagues be ordained with him. And so it came to pass that on October 2, 1813, with the consent and participation of the vestry of Otterbein's church, and the assistance of William Ryland, a minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Otterbein ordained elders for the United Brethren.

In this act some see Otterbein making a clean break with the German Reformed Church. Others believe that he was simply regularizing a ministry in a movement that now had an identity of its own. The fact remains that he is claimed with esteem by both the German Reformed Church and its successor, the United Church of Christ, and by the United Brethren, those continuing as a separate denomination and those who, as part of the Evangelical United Brethren Church, came into the United Methodist Church.

In the typical language of the American church of his day Otterbein would probably have been known as a “New Light” in New England, similar in spirit to Jonathan Edwards, who just a few years before had been discharged from his pulpit in Northampton for his evangelical views. In Presbyterian circles, Otterbein would have been a “New Side” pastor stressing with the Tennents the necessity of both education and religious experience.(30)

At Otterbein’s memorial service, held in his Baltimore church, Asbury said: “Forty years have I known the retiring modesty of this man of God: towering majestic above his fellows in his learning, wisdom and grace, yet seeking to be known only of God and the people of God.”(31)

## **THE LEGACY OF OTTERBEIN AND THE UNITED BRETHREN**

The United Church of Christ, at significant points, stands in the tradition of Otterbein and the United Brethren. His understanding of the church was covenantal without making a fetish of the term. His Rules of Order in Lancaster and the Constitution of his church in Baltimore are covenant documents that remind every baptized person in the community of faith that “membership” is more than ink on a church register. The importance of “classes” supports the participatory covenant community by providing weekly opportunities for Christians to assemble for prayer, personal sharing of faith journeys, and Bible study. Membership in the full congregation was a privilege prepared for by the nurture and discipline of the small church within the larger one, in the manner of the *collegia pietatis* of German pietism.

Otterbein’s concern for vital Christianity within the local church did not cause Otterbein to ignore the larger bond of unity among Christians. Even his early Rules of Order at Lancaster were presented to the Coetus and approved in 1757.(32) When he prepared the Constitution for the church at Baltimore, he was deliberate in including in it the following reference:

Persons wishing to commune with us at the Lord’s Table, although they have not been members of our church, shall be admitted by consent of the Vestry, provided that nothing can be alleged against their walk of life; and more especially, when it is known that they are seeking their salvation.

Forasmuch as the difference of people and denominations end in Christ,-(Romans 10:12, Colossians 3:11)- and availeth nothing in Him but a new creature-(Galatians 6:13-16)-it becomes our duty, according to the gospel, to commune with, and admit to the Lord’s table, professors, to whatever order, or sort, of the Christian church they belong.(33)

These words do not represent an indifferentism to matters of polity, but a subordination of diversity in polity to the higher value of common life in Jesus Christ. They are consistent with Otterbein’s view of classes in the local church and denominations in the larger church, as *ecclesiolae in ecclesia*, or little churches within the ecumenical church. In his preaching at the great meetings he often said, “I ask you not to leave your church; I only ask you to forsake your sins.”(34)

This regard for oneness in Christ that takes precedence over ecclesiastical structures is evident in the language used by the United Brethren to describe themselves. They called themselves, with Otterbein in their midst, “the unsectarian [*unpartheiische*] preachers,” dedicated to “preach untrammelled by sect to the honor of God and [the good of all].”(35) For Otterbein, faithfulness across denominational lines was urgent in an age when many within the churches were unregenerate. Otterbein’s commitment to ecumenism “led him to participate in the ‘unsectarian’ meetings of the United Brethren in the hope that, the more pietism grew, the more the church would become one.”(36) Otterbein’s relationship with the Coetus, the United Brethren, and the other denominations located in Pennsylvania and Maryland shows that “the Reformed Church has contributed its full share of effective ecumenists.”(37) This is reflected in Otterbein’s last days. On his deathbed he was ministered to by a Lutheran pastor, who joined with a Methodist minister to conduct his funeral two days later. His committal service was led by an Episcopal minister. Francis Asbury, a Methodist, preached his memorial service. Christian Newcomer remembered, “Here were ministers of different persuasions assembled to pay the last tribute of respect to this servant of the Most High,-Methodists, Brethren, Lutherans, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians- all mingled together to pay homage to [his] departed worth.”(38) Otterbein always held the *Heidelberg Catechism* in high regard. His rules in the Constitution of the Baltimore church specifically required that the pastor “catechize” the children and youth once a week. Although the *Heidelberg Catechism* was not specifically named, it informed Otterbein’s teaching and preaching. At the end of his life he arranged to have most of his papers burned. However, the one sermon that remains is organized on the basis of the three-part outline of the *Heidelberg Catechism*. Concerning human sin, he stated: “For by nature we are in a desperate condition. We are without God and are children of wrath.”(39) Concerning redemption, he wrote: “But just as fear arises from our sin, so also it ceases with the blotting out of the same. And that happens through Jesus Christ.”(40) With respect to part three, human gratitude and obedience, he asked: “Has Jesus delivered you from sin? Have you sat-and how long have you sat-weeping with Mary at the feet of Jesus? Which sin in you has been put to death by Jesus? Does Christ and his Spirit live and dwell in you? What good thing has grace wrought in you?”(41)

Otterbein’s use of the *Heidelberg Catechism* demonstrated an irenic spirit that affirmed the place of human confessions and yet subordinated them to scripture and the informed conscience. In the language of the United Church of Christ, he saw the *Heidelberg Catechism* more as a “testimony” than as a “test.” In the Constitution of the Baltimore church one finds that “no doctrinal standard outside the Bible, is ... referred to. The *Heidelberg Catechism* while prized by Mr. Otterbein, was yet, doubtless, at this time, accepted by him as Wesley accepted the Thirty-Nine Articles-with the reserved liberty to modify and construe. He catechised rather than taught a catechism.”(42)

Under the influence of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, Otterbein gave considerable attention to Christian education for persons of all ages. His brother Georg Otterbein was a champion of a sound psychology of education that sought to counter the rationalism of the age with concern for the affective nature of persons.(43) In all of Otterbein’s ministry the parish parochial school and the Bible study that characterized the classes extended the privilege of church education to adults as well.(44) The United Brethren, with some initial dissent on the part of an anti-intellectual minority, recognized Otterbein’s high regard for education by naming their first institution of higher learning Otterbein University.

The importance of the local congregation in Otterbein’s thought also shows a special affinity

with the United Church of Christ. Although he respected the Coetus, he shared fully in the decision of the Baltimore church to hold the title to its property separate from the Coetus. This eventually led to litigation between the Coetus and the Baltimore church in which a civil court decided in favor of the congregation.(45)

Otterbein's regard for the local church is also seen in his refusal to imitate the itinerancy system of the Methodists as a means to settle clergy. However, and despite Otterbein's personal views, the United Brethren later opted for the Methodist pattern. For Otterbein, itinerancy was a "voluntary" matter. There was a presbyterate among the "preachers" in the Pipe Creek meetings and the Annual Conferences, "but the primary governing power lies, according to Otterbein, in the local church."(46) Local churches could not agree on the scriptural warrant for membership lists; therefore, the decision was left to each local church. Preachers should "love one another" in spite of differing views on this issue.(47)

Otterbein was a moderate in doctrinal disputes. When confronted with those who wished to develop a schematic blueprint of the millennium, he would say: "Some of them believe that Christ will personally reign in his Church on earth a thousand years; but the best and most judicious divines do not believe that. And in this I agree with them."(48) To those who wished to make him an advocate of instantaneous conversion in opposition to growth in faith, he refuted the charge that he ever preached that a person must be converted in a moment.(49) "God acts according to his free and unlimited power and wisdom, calling one directly, another indirectly; pulling some at once fully from destruction as a brand from the burning, while with others the work proceeds more slowly."(50)

Even his disagreement with Calvin on predestination was expressed with humility and sensitivity. He explained to synodal authorities in Holland,

to tell the truth I cannot side with Calvin in this case. I believe that God is love and that he desires the welfare of all his creatures. I may be permitted to explain myself more clearly. I believe in election, but cannot persuade myself that God has absolutely and without condition predestined some to perdition.(51)

Otterbein pressed the issue of human responsibility in answer to what God has done in Christ for our salvation. He distinguished between the power of the cross to reconcile "God to us and Christ's yet-to-be-"concluded" work of reconciling us to God. With an impassioned emphasis on the place of suffering in the Christian life, he admonished the hearer to bear Christ's cross so that the "mystery, Christ in us," may become the means whereby Christ concludes his saving work in each believer.(52) Although he spoke eloquently about the possibility of "sanctification," and the "assurance" that one "can know whether Christ has killed sin in him [her]," he also cautioned: "If anything does cost, then certainly this does, in terms of determination and effort. That is why we only seldom meet such [people] in Christ in our time.(53) Otterbein had an optimism about human nature that did not adequately take into account the Reformation teaching of *simul justus et peccator*, but he also had a spiritual realism.(54)

Finally, Otterbein's view of the relation of the gospel to social issues was liberal for his time. When asked whether it was wise for a preacher to address political matters from the pulpit, he replied, "He that goes upon the sea will be tossed about by the waves, and whether he will get to shore, time must determine."(55) On other matters he was more direct. Although he smoked and used alcoholic beverages, he was firm in condemning excess and in calling an alcoholic friend to total abstinence.(56) He was opposed to the theater and once reasoned that the death of two

relatives in a theater fire was a warning from God to others in the family and to the city of Baltimore that such entertainment was inappropriate for Christians.(57)

On the question of slavery, there is little evidence of Otterbein's views. However, in 1815, two years after his death, the United Brethren established a constitutional rule that read: "All slavery, in every sense of the word, is totally prohibited, and shall in no wise be tolerated in our Church.(58) Observers note that these early leaders of the United Brethren, "living in Maryland, a slave state-showed it no favor, neither did they make war with it, but guarded the Church against this sin of sins.(59)

On the question of gambling, Otterbein and his Baltimore church took the road of expediency. In 1789, when a new bell was needed for the steeple, funds were raised by a special lottery authorized by the Maryland legislature.(60)

Otterbein decided not to occupy the large manse built for him while he was in Baltimore. He chose to remain in the old four-room house and asked that the income from the manse be distributed to the poor.(61) Otterbein, like Asbury, did not aggressively address social problems in a manner we might value today. However, personal faith was judged meaningless if it did not bear the fruits of righteousness in daily life. "Together, they held that both irreligion and conventional religion imperiled true religion.(62)

Philip William Otterbein, although he was a charismatic leader of an evangelical movement that became a separate denomination, remained a minister of the German Reformed Church until his death. In the debate between United Brethren historians and German Reformed historians, both sides sometimes lose sight of the fact that this "scholarly pietist" wished to maintain "a double relation."(63) "Fault" is easily assigned to the person of conscience who wishes, in the Pauline sense, to be all things to all persons.

Looking back one asks: How comprehensive can any one denomination be? Was it really necessary for the United Brethren movement to find a home outside the German Reformed Church? In their defensive response to "sectarianism," a term readily applied to any group that stretches the norms of the majority, denominations behave like sects and exclude those within their ranks who express the Christian faith with peculiar fervor. The wonder is not that Philip William Otterbein chose a "double relation," but that his choice so troubled others. History will bear him out that in the midst of the polemical debate, he was more an ecumenist than a schismatic.

In 1929 the United Brethren and the German Reformed Church, known as the Reformed Church in the United States, sought reconciliation in a united church, which would have included the Evangelical Synod of North America. Discussions proceeded to the extent of preparing a "Plan of Union" for the new denomination, "The United Church in America."(64) The "Plan of Union" was never adopted. However, it is evidence that the relationship between the United Brethren Church and the German Reformed Church had experienced God's healing grace.

The United Church of Christ, like the German Reformed Church of Otterbein's day, faces the question of how inclusive, how comprehensive, how catholic it can be. A review of Otterbein's "double relation" could help the UCC support those contemporary saints who, like Otterbein, wish to call the church to renewal and reform.

## Notes

1. Philip William Otterbein, "The Salvation-Bringing Incarnation and Glorious Victory of Jesus Christ Over the Devil and Death," in *Philip William Otterbein*, ed. Arthur C. Core (Dayton: the board of Publication, the Evangelical United Brethren Church, 1968) pp. 86-88. Referred to hereafter as "Sermon."
2. A. W. Drury, *The Life of Rev. Philip William Otterbein, founder of the church of the United Brethren in Christ* (Dayton: United Brethren Publishing House, 1884), p. 47. As was the custom in Germany, Otterbein used his second name throughout his life.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
4. *Ibid.*
5. Core, op. Cit., pp. 14-15.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
7. John Steven O'Malley, *The Otterbeins: The Postlude of Pietism*. Ph.D. diss., Drew University. 1970, p. 284.
8. Drury, op. cit., p. 56.
9. J. Bruce Behney and Paul Eller, *the History of the Evangelical United Brethren Church*, ed. Kenneth W. Krueger (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1979), p. 27.
10. *Minutes and letters of the Coetus of the German Reformed Congregations in Pessylvania 1747-1792* (Philadelphia: Reformed Church Publication Board, 1903), p. 340. Hereafter *Coetus*.
11. Drury, op. cit., p. 256.
12. Core, op. cit., p. 109. This was not new. It had been done in 1725 by John Philip Boehm in Philadelphia. See O'Malley, op. cit., p. 413.
13. Henry Harbaugh, *The Fathers of the German Reformed Church in Europe and America*, vol. 2 (Lancaster, PA: J. M. Westhaeffer, 1872), p. 52.
14. Drury, op. cit., p. 68.
15. Paul H. Eller, "Philip William Otterbein and Francis Asbury" in Core, op. cit., p. 66.
16. Drury, op. cit., pp. 102-3
17. *Ibid.*, p. 117.
18. O'Malley, op. cit., p. 429.
19. Core, op. cit., p. 99.
20. *Coetus*, op. cit., p. 300
21. Henry G. Spayth, *History of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ* (Circleville, OH: Conference Office of the United Brethren in Christ, 1851), p. 43.
22. Core, op. cit., pp. 109-14.
23. Drury, op. cit., p. 183.
24. Core, op. cit., p. 27.

25. Francis Hollingsworth, "Notices of the Life and Labours of Martin Boehm and William Otterbein; and other Ministers of the Gospel among the United German Brethren," *The Methodist Magazine* 6 (July 1823):253.
26. Core, op. cit., p. 34.
27. Coetus, op. cit., p. 428.
28. Core, op. cit., p. 122.
29. Christian Newcomer, *The Life and Journal of the Rev.'d Christian Newcomer, Late Bishop of the United Brethren in Christ*, trans. John Rust (Hagerstown, MD: F. G. W. Knapp, 1834), p. 219.
30. Raymond W. Albright, "Philip William Otterbein: Reformed Pietist" in Core, op. cit., p. 55.
31. Eller, in Core, op. cit., p. 66.
32. *Coetus*, op. cit., pp. 154-55.
33. Core, op. cit., p. 111.
34. Harbaugh, op. cit., p. 68.
35. Core, op. cit., p. 120.
36. OMalley, op. cit., p. 340.
37. Core, op. cit., p. 28.
38. Newcomer, op. cit., p. 223.
39. Otterbein, "Sermon," in Core, op. cit., p. 78.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 82.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 88.
42. Drury, op. cit., p. 177.
43. OMalley, op. cit., p. 448.
44. Core, op. cit., pp. 20-21.
45. Drury, op. cit., pp. 165-66.
46. Jeffrey P. Mickle, "A Comparison of the Doctrines of Ministry of Francis Asbury and Philip William Otterbein," *Methodist History* 19 (July 1981):197.
47. Core, op. cit., p. 124.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 102.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 101.
50. *Ibid.*
51. *Ibid.*, p. 100.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 84.

53. Ibid., pp. 84-86.
54. OMalley, op. cit., p. 386.
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56. Core, op. cit., p. 105.
57. Ibid., p. 106.
58. Spayth, op. cit., p. 155.
59. Ibid.
60. Drury, op. cit., p. 333.
61. Core, op. cit., p. 60.
62. Ibid., p. 69.
63. Drury, op. cit., p. 261.
64. *The United Church in America, A Handbook of Information* Published by the Reformed Church in the U.S.A., the United Brethren in Christ, and the Evangelical Synod of North America (n.p., n.d.).