



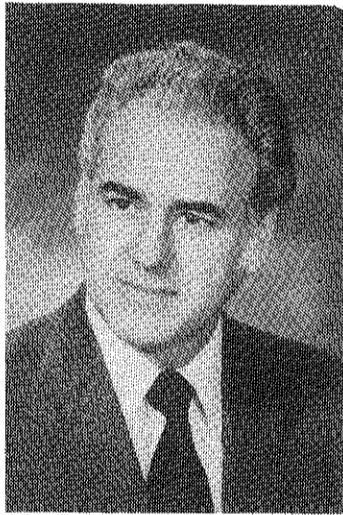
Bible & Religion

at Eastern Mennonite University

The Newsletter of the Bible & Religion Department / Winter 1995

Augsburger speaks at Homecoming Breakfast

A delicious breakfast on the hill in the Discipleship Center, the well-known speaker (and former EMU president) Myron Augsburger, and the theme "The Future of Biblical Studies in a Christian Liberal Arts University" attracted a capacity crowd to the Haverim breakfast on October 14 during homecoming weekend.



As the cost of education rises in Christian liberal arts colleges, students increasingly are concerned about their ability to secure positions with enough income to pay off student loans. Do the economic realities of education change the traditional role of the Bible Department?

Augsburger believes that Biblical education is extremely vital, but if Bible Departments are to remain relevant, their role must change. Instead of viewing themselves as just one of the many specialized departments or schools within a large university, Augsburger pictures them "as yeast, having wide influence, initiating conversation and dialogue with other disciplines." The medieval university, with the cathedral and school of theology physically occupying the center space of the campus, is a model to which Augsburger pointed. "Theology, 'the queen of sciences,' served to connect the entire university, and to integrate all disciplines. The Bible Department in a modern Christian liberal arts college can function in a similar way. It should not become a cloister for specialists but should serve the whole learning community."

"The wave of the future in evangelism and mission," Augsburger asserted, "will not be limited to sending out persons to do church planting and mission, but professionals with a strong commitment to faith and missions willing to serve around the world. In addition to preparing specialists, the Bible Department needs to contribute to the education of all students."

AND THE ANSWER IS . . .

The giant that David killed with a stone and slingshot was:
a) Rechab b) Og c) Samson d) Goliath

For most of you reading this the question is easily answered. Probably that was also true when you first entered EMU. As many of you know, the level of biblical literacy today varies greatly among incoming students.

One way we are addressing this disparity at EMU is to structure our first year courses in the Faith sequence of the Global Village (General Education) curriculum to meet the students where they are. Not quite sorting the sheep from the goats, but recognizing the need to challenge both those with a good knowledge of the Scriptures and those who do not know about David and Goliath (or was it Og?).

In order to discover the level of preparedness we are also including questions like the following:

True or False: The story of God making humankind in his image is part of the second creation story.

The course for the less-well-prepared (or whatever the P.C. term is) is entitled *Introduction to the Bible*. We modeled it on Module 5 (Biblical Perspectives) from the new Adult Degree Completion Program which addresses the same problem and will be available for first year students this Spring.

HAVERIM MEETS IN OHIO

Charter Haverim member John Freed, pastor of Martins Mennonite Church near Orrville, Ohio, thinks that when pastors and professors listen to each other, everyone learns. Recently, under the auspices of Haverim, he organized several events in the Wayne and Holmes county area of Ohio where this happened.

Linford Stutzman, assistant professor of Culture and Mission, was invited to speak and lead discussions. On Saturday evening, at an EMU alumni banquet, he spoke on the theme "Passing on the Faith to the Next Generation."

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Professor Ray Gingerich talks with students after a Faith & Heritage class.

On Sunday, November 5, Stutzman preached on missions in the Martins and Smithville congregations. Monday morning, at a breakfast meeting at *Das Dutch* restaurant, he met with a group of area pastors for an evaluative discussion of the cell church phenomenon.

The value of this kind of dialogue can not be underestimated. Stutzman commented: "It is hard to test the validity of ideas in a class full of students worried about their grades. Pastors take ideas seriously and give excellent feedback from a pastoral perspective. I wish all professors of Bible would regularly have this kind of opportunity to interact with church leaders."

If you would like to be a friend of the Bible Department by organizing a Haverim event in your area, please contact department chair Herb Swartz, or another faculty member of the Bible Department you would like to invite. Professors and pastors can learn together.

NEWS FLASH

Hopefully you have read the announcement in the Gospel Herald or on MennoLink or wherever, soliciting applications for a teacher to fill the vacancy in Ethics, Philosophy & Theology left by Steve Dintaman's departure.

While we haven't been inundated like Johnstown (many decades ago) or the Shenandoah Valley (a decade ago), we have received a bountiful shower -- mostly PhD's, male and female with lots of church involvement and such glowing references! Pray with us as we begin the sorting process under the Spirit's guidance. Or would it be simpler to "cast the lot"?

It Was Great Talking to You....

Our *Haverim* phonathon on the evening of September 18 was a great success. It gave us the opportunity to be personally in touch with you, our members. We received \$2,650 in membership pledges by the end of the evening. Also, *Haverim* gained 17 new members through this effort. Some of you sent your contributions in advance of the phonathon. You saved us a phone call. Thanks for the additional \$710. We thank you, friends!

Haverim Steering Committee,

Clyde Kratz, Mark Wenger, Sam Thomas,
Ruth Zimmerman, Herb Swartz and Janet Stutzman

