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German Baptists
of North America

FRIEDRICH REICHLER

Now our Brother Friedrich Reichle, the old pilgrim and servant of Jesus Christ has departed our ranks at the age of 87 years, 2 months, and 19 days. He was born on July 16, 1834 in Ueberlingen, Baden, Germany. His Catholic parents wanted to have him educated as a priest, but the Lord had His own plan for him. He learned the bakery trade and came during his travels to Muehlhausen in Elsass. There, he found not only work, rather also His Savior and was baptized in 1856 on the confession of his faith. Immediately the love of Christ compelled him to do something for his Lord. He worked in the youth organization and soon also as assistant preacher at the stations of the Congregation Muehlhausen. After this congregation had ordained him in 1858 he served it until 1864 as preacher; then he followed a call of the congregation in Moeckmuehl whose pastor he was till 1871.

From 1871 to 1881 he served the Congregation Bischofszell in Switzerland and in Sept., 1881 he went to America. There he was called by the congregation near Scotland, S. Dakota, at that time the only one in that large area. Tyndall, Anon, Emanuels Creek, Plum Creek, Bridgewater, Parkston, Menno and Yankton were stations of this congregation then and were served by Brother Reichle, so that he sometimes was weeks on end away from his family making his missionary trips with his Indian ponies. He worked nine years in this ministry and was allowed to baptize during this time 102 souls in Jesus' death. In 1890 Brother Reichle moved to Portland, Oregon, where at that time some families of our fellowship lived. Immediately he began to gather this dispersion of believers. At first he held meetings in his apartment on Baker St. and soon thereafter in the English Baptist Church, which stood on 4th and Alder. On the 3rd of January 1891 he organized with the help of Brother H. L. Dietz the First Congregation in Portland. Three of his own children were the first German Baptists who were baptized by Brother Reichle in Portland. Then the congregation gave him a call; to be sure with sympathy, that a man should work there who had mastered the native language. So he worked only nine months more and then moved to Stafford, Oregon. From Stafford he served Portland until the arrival of the preacher W. Rabe.

Brother Reichle lived until 1902 in Stafford where he alternately served the congregation there and those in Turner and Salem. In 1902 he moved back to Portland, where he united with the Second Congregation. There he was to spend the rest of his life. For a time he served as interim pastor. He also sought as long as his energies allowed to help wherever he could. Always modest and without demands, his life was full of effort and privation; still he gave with joy according to his means for the work of the Lord. His beloved wife spent 53 years together with him and helped him faithfully in the ministry.

died Oct 5, 1921
married Oct 5, 1868

Exactly on their 53rd wedding anniversary Sister Reichle became a widow. The Lord blessed them with ten children one of which died before the father. With the mourning widow are six sons, three daughters and 20 grandchildren who all live with the hope of a happy reunion.

In the last five years I had the pleasure to be Brother Reichle's preacher. Although he was blind he took his place in the house of the Lord as much as possible. His presence and his attentiveness inspired me. How he loved to call the name of the Lord and he was always ready to witness for his Master. My frequent visits to him served to strengthen me. He retained his interest in the things of God until the end. Then his energy diminished and he longed to go home. Finally, after a long wait and some groans, the Lord freed him from all earthly suffering and helped him to his heavenly kingdom. (Oct. 5, 1921) In regard to his own life experiences Brother Reichle said like Mark 7:37: "The Lord hath made everything well". He wanted this verse for his funeral. Many brothers and sisters and friends took part in the funeral. Abundant gifts of flowers showed the sympathy of many friends. Five preachers were on the platform and others were present at the gathering. The signer read aloud the life story of the deceased and said a few words about the verse. Brother I. Kratt, pastor of the First Congregation, said that Brother Reichle had welcomed him 25 years ago here in Portland. Brother F. Buermann, pastor of the Third Congregation, told of his many years of association with Brother Reichle and Brother W. Graf of the Bethany Church spoke also comforting words. Many brothers prayed. Appropriate songs were sung by the church choir and by a pastor quartet. The six sons of the deceased carried the casket of their father. The coffin was placed in the Rose City Cemetery and awaits the first resurrection.

F. Hoffmann.

Jim: I have the original news
article printed in German if
you ever want to see it -
Kau