

METHODIST HISTORY

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ALVA BUTTON ROBERTS



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Cover: Alva Button Roberts (1872-1950) was one of the founders of Indiana Central University and an ordained clergywoman in the United Brethren Church (see article starting on p. 213 of this issue). Photo used with permission of the United Methodist Archives at De Pauw University, Greencastle, Indiana.

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GUEST EDITORS' NOTE

This issue commemorates the fortieth anniversary of the merger of the Evangelical United Brethren Church and the Methodist Church to form The United Methodist Church. The issue commemorates this merger in two distinct ways. On the one hand the issue continues the ongoing work of retrieving and interpreting the history of the Evangelical United Brethren Church for United Methodists today. To this end, the essays by J. Steven O'Malley and Michael G. Cartwright are especially relevant, the former exploring the Radical United Brethren Secession of 1889 with a view toward enriching the history of American Evangelicalism, and the latter demonstrating the commitment of the United Brethren to higher education and learning. In addition, the appendices provide invaluable information for persons interested in further study of the Evangelical United Brethren tradition.

On the other hand, this issue attempts to shed light on the continuing significance of the merger of the Evangelical United Brethren Church and the Methodist Church for The United Methodist Church today. To this end, the essay by Jason E. Vickers is particularly important, calling attention to some of the crucial contributions of the EUB Confession of Faith to United Methodist standards of doctrine.

Finally, it is only fitting for us to express our gratitude to Robert J. Williams for the opportunity to guest edit this issue. One of us has mined the history and theology of the Evangelical United Brethren Church and its predecessor bodies for more than four decades. The other has only recently begun to discover the riches of this great tradition. In putting together this issue, it has been our sincere hope that others will be enticed to explore further the robust and rewarding terrain that is the Evangelical and United Brethren heritage of United Methodism.

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