

HISTORY OF NEBRASKA CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

The history of Nebraska Christian College goes back to 1944, when on October 26 of that year "fifteen Christian people met in Wymore to talk over possibilities and formulate plans" for the starting of the school. Guy B. Dunning was elected president, and Norfolk was chosen as a location because of a favorable relationship with the already existent Norfolk Junior College, where general education classes could be used to supplement the Bible College curriculum.

The purpose of the college was stated as "the teaching and training of gospel preachers who will be true to Christ and the Bible," and in addition the offering of a program of study for "other young people who desire... to be better Christians, and to be able to render more and better service to Christ and their Church."

The state of Nebraska became a part of the Union in 1867. In the years following the Civil War it grew rapidly. Many of the newcomers were people from Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Iowa, where the Restoration Movement was strong, and these brought their faith with them to their new location. The first town organized in Nebraska, Brownville, was established by a member of the Restoration Movement and such men as D. R. Dungan, Governor Saunders, and many others had a strong impact on the political, cultural, and religious foundations of Nebraska.

As the Twentieth Century progressed, many of these settlers moved again to the far west (California, Oregon, Washington), leaving behind declining populations in the Christian Churches, and many closed doors across the state. Especially in the Eastern one-half of the state, there are communities where the Christian Church which once flourished is only a memory. Others struggled against great odds to continue to exist. In the Western half the Christian Churches never were strong nor numerous, and this situation continues to the present time.

In the 30's, Guy B. Dunning, together with his family, moved to Nebraska and began the task of pastoring the churches. He settled in the Elkhorn Valley and soon became aware of the large number of pastorless churches in the state, as well as the large number of communities where no Restoration Movement congregation existed.

Single handedly he began to work on this problem, and soon there were a number of churches established in the Elkhorn Valley, then later in the eastern Platte Valley and the Loup River areas. As of this writing, no one person has had so large an influence on the Nebraska Churches - especially those outside of the two larger communities of Omaha and Lincoln - as Guy B. Dunning. There is still a significant number of the members in the churches of the three river valleys mentioned who remember "Guy B." as the evangelist who brought them to Christ, and who nurtured them in their early years.

The need for ministers to lead these churches was seen, and Mr. Dunning together with others promoted the idea of a Bible College in Nebraska.

The following history appears in early issues of the College Catalog:

For many years Nebraska churches have felt keenly the need for a loyal and vigorous Bible College located in this State—a school where ministers of the Gospel could receive their training without going outside Nebraska for that schooling, and, as so frequently happens, remaining near their school to minister. The gain to the Kingdom from the Christian youth of Nebraska has been very great, but much of their vision and courage has enriched fields far from home.

The need for a Bible College for northeast Nebraska was visualized some fifteen years ago by the late John L. Snyder of Norfolk, George Bell, then minister of the Norfolk Church of Christ, and Guy Dunning, minister-evangelist of the Elkhorn Valley. This visualizing was done at a time when an outstanding work was being accomplished by Gospel teams composed of young people of the churches of the Valley of the Elkhorn.

Plans for Nebraska Christian College date back to work done by Guy B. Dunning and Robert E. Hanson during the meeting with "Bob" held for Brother Dunning at Wayne, in 1940, when plans were formulated for a school to meet in conjunction with a liberal arts college to furnish the secular subjects. It was hoped that some arrangement could be worked out with the Wayne State Teachers College, but after some negotiation, it was decided that such an arrangement would have to await a more auspicious time and place.

However, the dream of these two men has been communicated to others during the years, particularly at Pibel Bible Camp, whose students have seldom failed to go on unanimous record favoring a Nebraska School. Two of Nebraska's young preachers, Roy Coop and Harold Milliken, decided to contact Norfolk Junior College to see if some arrangement could be made with this school. A prompt and courteous reply by officials led to the formulation of plans which came to fruition in the corporation of Nebraska Christian College.

Brother Virgil Marshall of Wymore was elected as the first chairman of the Board of Trustees; J. F. Con-
tois of Clearwater was to be vice chairman; Lyle Childs of Clay Center was selected for secretary

and the responsibility of the treasuryship was given to Roy A. Coop of Madison. Guy B. Dunning, minister at Auburn, was elected to serve as president of the Bible College, and also as fifth member of the Executive Board with the four officers previously elected.

The College began in a large frame structure located at 909 Park in the heart of Norfolk. This housed classrooms and administrative offices. Across the corner, at 312 South 10th Street, another large home was remodeled to provide dormitory space for women, and also a dining hall. The catalog of the first year indicates that the college faculty numbered four people, Guy B. Dunning, President; J. Merlin Hill, Dean; Verol Boyd Hill, and Anna M. Dunning. Listed in the catalog also are seven members of the Norfolk Junior College faculty who taught classes in the area of General Education.

The student list published in the Second Annual Catalog indicates that some 26 students were enrolled on a "regular" basis the first year, with six listed as "part-time" and four as "special".

In 1947, C. Willis Schnelle came to the college as Dean, replacing Merlin Hill, and in 1949, Mr. Schenlle became President of the school, and Harold B. Milliken was called to serve as Dean. The student roster for 1949-50 shows thirty-seven students enrolled for that school year.

In 1957 with an enrollment of 80 students crowding the limits of the 909 Park building beyond further capacity, plans were inaugurated to expand.

Property was acquired (2 vacant lots) directly across the street from the original building. A drive for capital funds was set up to enlist area churches, interested individuals, and the Norfolk business community in the building program. The services of Willard Archer, then of Chicago, Illinois were secured as financial advisor. As the funds began to come in, building was begun in the fall of 1958, with completion in October of 1959. The new structure housed six classrooms, library, food services, and administrative offices. The old building was remodeled as a women's dormitory; the first dormitory and two other area homes located at 304 South 10 and 308 South 10 provided housing for male students.

The 1959 catalog lists the following faculty and administrative personnel:

Harold B. Milliken, President
Robert E. Hanson, Professor of Missions and New Testament
Loren T. Swedburg, Dean
Ralph Johnson, Professor of Old and New Testaments
Melva Swedburg, Professor of Christian Education
Lowell Burkum, Professor of Music
Sherry Hanley, Office Secretary
Beverly Dietz, Office Assistant

At the time of the move, student enrollment stood at 58, with a breakdown of students as follows:

Men - 30
Women - 28

Nebraska - 22	North Dakota - 2
Iowa - 16	Montana - 1
Missouri - 6	South Dakota - 1
Colorado - 4	Minnesota - 1
California - 2	Idaho - 1
Indiana - 2	Wyoming - 1

By 1967 the College Administration was faced with a major decision. It had become apparent that any expansion at the Park Avenue site would involve the purchase of area homes and subsequent demolition or removal of these properties in order to have room for new buildings. Rather than follow this course, property was located on the northwest edge of town-- eighty-five acres of unoccupied land at a price within reach. In the fall of 1968, work was begun on a dormitory designed to accomodate one hundred six students, with completion and occupation in October 1969.

The arrangement with students housed in the new dormitory and classes held in the old building was not a very satisfactory one. The old dormitories were sold, and after considerable financial planning based on patterns developed in the 1957 drive, the administrative offices and classrooms were completed on the new campus. The move was made to the new site during the semester break of the 1971-72 school year.

In the summer and fall months of 1973, Everett Epperson, a trustee of the college, directed a group of men from the Onawa, Iowa church where he ministered, in the building of a four-plex for married student housing. Work was begun on a multipurpose building (auditorium, physical education, etc.) which was supported with an extensive drive for funds among alumni, as well as the churches and Norfolk community. This building was completed in 1974, and was named Alumni Hall.

The following year saw the completion of the Myles Patton Music Centre, housing faculty offices, classrooms, and seven individual practice rooms. The initial funds from this came from a Norfolk family in memory of a son lost in an accident.

In 1976 a second wing was added the the Alumni Hall complex, the L. E. Morris Student Centre, containing the food services and a student lounge. This addition was named for a local Norfolk man who had shown much interest in the college and left his estate to the school when he died.

The fall of 1978 saw the addition of two new four-plex units for student housing, and the year 1979-80 one more, making it possible to house all currently enrolled single students on the college campus.

Faculty wise, the years between 1972 and 1978 saw the addition of Richard E. Brown to head up the ministries department, Allen Boelter as business manager and athletic coach, Richard Wamsley as dean of students. Enrollment during this period seemed fairly stable between 160-180 students, coming from Nebraska, Western Iowa, Colorado, Montana and other central states.

Nebraska Christian College Campus Development History

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| 1944- | October- | 16 Christian leaders meet in Wymore NE to organize plans to Nebraska Christian College. |
| 1945 | August | First Classes are offered in Norfolk, NE. Classes and offices were held in the same building at 909 Park St. Students take general education classes at the Norfolk Junior College at 5 th and Park. |
| 1958- | Spring | Plans are begun to build a new Administration and classroom building at 910 Park St. That building is used from 1959 thru 1969. |
| 1969 | Fall | Residence Dorm is built on the current 85 acre campus in Northwest Norfolk. A shop building is built the same year. |
| 1970- | Spring | Tennis Courts are built |
| 1972 | January | Administration Building is built. It houses offices, classrooms, library, and cafeteria. |
| | Fall | First of the four-plex apartments for Married students is built. |
| 1973 | Summer | Alumni Hall Gymnasium/Auditorium is built. |
| 1976 | Spring | Miles Dana Patton Music Centre and the L. E. Morris Student Centre (Cafeteria and Student Lounge) |
| 1980 | Spring | Anderson Hall married student 8-plex is built. |

Nebraska Christian College is a church-vocations oriented college, offering programs of study at the college level, which are "professional" in nature. The primary purpose of the college is to provide education and training for various types of Christian ministry—Pastoral Ministry; Christian Education Ministry; Youth Minister; various Music Ministries; Missionary; Church Secretary.

In addition to the above, the college recognizes that there are a number of people who, while not intending to serve in one of the above areas of ministry, do desire education which will equip them for more effective Christian witness as members and workers in local churches such as teaching, leadership (elders and deacons) and youth sponsors.

To meet these needs, the college offers programs of study which are flexible enough to be tailored to individual needs. Four and five-year programs are designed for the person who desires to devote a life to an area of specialized ministries. Two-year programs are designed for those who desire to serve more effectively at the non-professional level or who plan to pursue a course of study unavailable at Nebraska Christian College.

DEGREES

Three degree programs are offered by Nebraska Christian College.

The ASSOCIATE OF ARTS (A.A.) is a two-year (64 credit hours) degree requiring a concentration in Biblical Studies plus one of the following: Christian Education, Church Music, Church Secretarial, Deaf Ministry, Missions, Pastoral Ministry, or General Studies.

The BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A.) is a four-year (130 credit hours) degree designed to prepare the student for a career in some specialized area of Christian Ministry. It requires a major in Biblical Studies, a minimum of one year of foreign language and a Christian Ministry major with one of the following concentrations: Christian Education, Church Music, Missions, Pastoral Ministry or Youth Ministry.

The BACHELOR OF THEOLOGY (B.Th.) is a five-year (100 credit hour) degree designed to prepare the student for a career in some specialized area of Christian Ministry. It builds upon the Bachelor of Arts degree.

New Way Singers ---- Bit of History

It began in 1972, after hours of planning and organization. The name for the New Way Singers comes from the Hebrews passage that says, "This is the fresh, new life-giving way which Christ has opened up for us by tearing the curtain—his human body—to let us into the holy presence of God." 70 High school students auditioned that first year with 26 students chosen. Thus began the New Way Singers. From the first when New Way Singers were formed in 1972, it was apparent that relationships were being formed which will last for eternity. So the slogan "New way Singers now and forever" came into being. New way Singers quickly grew to two touring groups in 1977 and then three in 1979. Since then it has remained at three groups, with the exception of one year that had four.

Today, each group averages 40 students. Alumni number around 1300.