

Samuel R. Zug

On 29 February 1832, Samuel Ruhl Zug was born in Lancaster County to Benjamin and Elizabeth Ruhl Zug. Zug's ancestors, Ulrich Zug and his wife, came to Elizabethtown from Switzerland in 1727. At first, they were a part of the Mennonite Church, but in 1742, they united with the Church of the Brethren. Zug's grandfather, John or Hannes Zug, married Anna Heffelfinger around 1758 and was ordained as an Elder in 1780. Their son, Benjamin, was born 12 July 1802 and married Elizabeth in 1824.¹

Their son, Zug, wanted to learn the trade of blacksmithing, but he had stay home and help the family build a house. He worked on his family's farm until 1850, when he then began attending school in Lititz, Pennsylvania. In March 1851, Zug contracted typhoid fever and did not return to school. He did eventually teach school and was elected to the office of school director in 1855.² He worked as a surveyor and real estate agent for forty years, before focusing on his place within the Brethren.³ In 1852, the minister and district leader married Fannie W. Shelley, with whom he had four sons.⁴ The two converted to the Church of the Brethren in 1861 by baptism on a farm near Manheim, Pennsylvania.⁵

In 1865, Zug was elected to the ministry of the White Oak Land, landing him his first major role within the Church.⁶ Zug attended the first District Meeting in 1866, and was present for every meeting after. For twenty years, he served as the Clerk or Moderator for the meetings.⁷ In 1868, after a split in the White Oak Church, Zug established the new congregation of the Chiques Church in Manheim.⁸ In 1885, he was ordained as the Elder in charge of the church.⁹ In the spring of 1879, Zug organized the first Sunday School of the Church of the Brethren.¹⁰ Later in the year, Zug, as a newly elected member of the Home Mission Board, spent his time actively serving in the field and providing insight for the Board.¹¹ On 25 February 1885, Zug was chosen by stockholders to be on the board of directors for the Elizabethtown National Bank.¹² In 1888, a new Brethren church was built at 61 East Washington Street in Elizabethtown, where Zug served as clergy.¹³

On 29 October 1891, the Lancaster City Congregation of the Church of the Brethren was created, and Zug was designated as the Elder in control.¹⁴ He was also a Bishop for this congregation between 1891 and 1899.¹⁵ In 1893, Zug was appointed to the General Missionary and Tract Committee, as he supported domestic and international missions.¹⁶ In the same year, he was the "primary mover" for the first ever Ministerial Meeting held in Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania, attending every annual meeting up until his death.¹⁷ In 1895, Zug and Elder B. Z. Eby established the Home for the Homeless, which Zug was a Trustee of until 1912.¹⁸ On 19 November 1896,

¹ History of the Church of the Brethren of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania (Lancaster, PA: The New Era Printing Company, 1915), 429.

² *Ibid.*, 430.

³ *The Brethren Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, s.v. "Samuel Ruhl Zug," (Philadelphia and Oak Brook, IL: The Brethren Encyclopedia Inc., 1983), 1401.

⁴ History of the Church of the Brethren of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, 434.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 430.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 388.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 433.

⁸ Jean-Paul Benowitz, Historic Elizabethtown Pennsylvania: A Walking Tour (Elizabethtown: Elizabethtown College, 2015), 56.

⁹ History of the Church of the Brethren of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, 396.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 431.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 433.

¹² Jean-Paul Benowitz, Images of America: Elizabethtown (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2015), 28.

¹³ Benowitz, Historic Elizabethtown Pennsylvania: A Walking Tour, 47.

¹⁴ History of the Church of the Brethren of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, 341.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 345.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 433.; *The Brethren Encyclopedia*, 1401.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 434.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 434.

the Harrisburg Church was organized by Zug, David Etter, and Jacob C. Eshleman. Zug remained in charge of the congregation until 1911.¹⁹

On 29 November 1898, Zug attended the first public meeting to discuss the possibility of establishing a Brethren school and said, “We need a co-educational school for our young people.”²⁰ On 5 April 1899, Zug was the Moderator of the second public meeting, held in the Elizabethtown German Baptist Brethren Church, meant to review possible sites for the new college.²¹ He asked questions such as “Shall we have a school?” and “What kind of a school do we want?”²² The meeting adjourned with the creation of the Locating Committee, which Zug was appointed to.²³ On 24 May 1899, at the Annual Conference of the Church of the Brethren in Roanoke, Virginia, the town of Elizabethtown was chosen by the Locating Committee for the college.²⁴ There were protests, but on 6 June 1899, at S. H. Hertzler’s home in Elizabethtown, the Locating Committee voted again, and it was decided the college would be built in Elizabethtown.²⁵ On 4 March 1901, the Dedication of Alpha Hall took place and Zug gave the Dedication Sermon.²⁶

On 28 March 1902, a special council meeting of the Elizabethtown Brethren appointed Zug the Elder of the new congregation in Fairview, created from the division of the Chiques territory.²⁷ He served as a Bishop for the Chiques Church from 1885 to 1910.²⁸ On 2 May 1902, the Elizabethtown Church was organized with Zug as the lead Elder.²⁹ He served as a Bishop and was on the ordination committee from 1902 to 1912.³⁰ Tragedy struck on 10 July 1905, when his supportive wife, Fannie, passed away.³¹ On 1 April 1906, Zug and his youngest son, John C. Zug, moved to Elizabethtown and in 1910 transferred their membership to the church.³²

On 15 May 1911, at a District Meeting, Zug was appointed to a committee to collect statistics and information about the Church of the Brethren in Eastern Pennsylvania.³³ He was assigned to write data on the churches in the White Oak Group, Big Swatara, Spring Creek and its subdivisions, and Harrisburg.³⁴ Zug and Elder Herr shared the job of gathering information on the Swatara Group, with Zug contributing articles on District Meetings, Annual meetings, and biographical sketches.³⁵ This information, along with what other Brethren gathered, led to the creation of the book History of the Church of the Brethren of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

In 1912, Zug resigned his care of the Elizabethtown Church.³⁶ Zug passed away in 1926, after a long, fulfilling life.³⁷ His son, Elder John C. Zug, donated \$43,000 to the building of the new library at Elizabethtown College, which was then named after Zug.³⁸ At the time Zug Hall was built, it was geographically placed in the center of the campus, showing its importance and Zug’s influence.³⁹

¹⁹ Ibid., 488-489.

²⁰ Ralph W. Schlosser, History of Elizabethtown College 1899-1970 (Elizabethtown: Elizabethtown College, 1971), 5.

²¹ Chet Williamson, Uniting Work and Spirit: A Centennial History of Elizabethtown College (Elizabethtown: Elizabethtown College, 2001), 13-14.

²² Jean-Paul Benowitz and Peter J. DePuydt, The Campus History Series: Elizabethtown College (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2014), 11.

²³ Schlosser, 15.

²⁴ Ibid., 16.

²⁵ Ibid., 16-17.

²⁶ Ibid., 43.

²⁷ History of the Church of the Brethren of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, 431.

²⁸ Ibid., 398.

²⁹ Ibid., 407.

³⁰ Ibid., 421.

³¹ Ibid., 434.

³² Ibid., 397.

³³ Ibid., VIII.

³⁴ Ibid., VIII.

³⁵ Ibid., VIII.

³⁶ Ibid., 432.

³⁷ *The Brethren Encyclopedia*, 1401.

³⁸ Schlosser, 196.

³⁹ Benowitz, Historic Elizabethtown Pennsylvania: A Walking Tour, 55-56.