

GERMAN BAPTIST BRETHERN (DUNKERS)

GENERAL STATEMENT

The general statement of the early history of the Brethren, Dunkers, or German Baptist Brethren, is presented very largely in the section for the Church of the Brethren (Conservative Dunkers), the oldest and largest of these bodies. In view of the fact that they have been popularly known, not as "German Baptist Brethren," but as "Dunkers," or "Dunkards," that name has been preserved.

The denominations grouped under the name German Baptist Brethren (Dunkers) in 1926, in 1916, and in 1906, are listed in the table below, with the principal statistics as reported for the three periods. The denomination reported in 1916 as German Seventh Day Baptists is now known as Seventh Day Baptist (German, 1728), and the denomination then reported as Old Order German Baptist Brethren is now shown under its correct name, Old German Baptist Brethren; one body listed in 1916 was not reported at the census of 1906.

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR THE GERMAN BAPTIST BRETHERN (DUNKERS), 1926, 1916, AND 1906

DENOMINATION AND CENSUS YEAR	Total number of churches	Number of members	VALUE OF CHURCH EDIFICES		EXPENDITURES DURING YEAR		SUNDAY SCHOOLS	
			Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Amount	Churches reporting	Number of scholars
1926								
Total for the group	1,279	158,248	1,206	\$11,110,013	1,182	\$2,293,622	1,067	133,483
Church of the Brethren (Conservative Dunkers).....	1,030	128,392	968	8,630,499	951	1,744,755	895	109,891
Old German Baptist Brethren.....	62	3,036	59	161,450	53	18,781	-----	-----
The Brethren Church (Progressive Dunkers).....	174	26,026	166	2,274,064	166	523,681	160	22,917
Seventh Day Baptists (German, 1728).....	4	144	4	18,000	3	2,400	3	144
Church of God (New Dunkers).....	9	650	9	26,000	9	4,005	9	531
1916								
Total for the group	1,283	133,626	1,188	5,055,835	1,154	924,630	1,097	136,365
Church of the Brethren (Conservative Dunkers).....	997	105,102	928	3,990,898	911	705,725	899	111,686
Old Order German Baptist Brethren.....	67	3,399	60	107,212	43	7,120	-----	-----
The Brethren Church (Progressive Dunkers).....	201	24,060	184	896,725	185	204,562	183	23,728
German Seventh Day Baptists.....	5	136	3	33,000	4	1,980	3	152
Church of God (New Dunkers).....	13	929	13	28,000	11	5,243	12	799
1906								
Total for the group	1,090	97,144	974	2,802,532	-----	-----	866	78,575
German Baptist Brethren Church, Conservative.....	815	76,547	741	2,198,957	-----	-----	708	66,595
Old Order German Baptist Brethren.....	68	3,388	57	89,800	-----	-----	-----	-----
The Brethren Church (Progressive Dunkers).....	202	17,042	172	472,975	-----	-----	156	11,850
German Seventh Day Baptists.....	5	167	4	40,800	-----	-----	2	130

CHURCH OF GOD (NEW DUNKERS)

STATISTICS

Summary for the United States, with urban-rural classification.—A general summary of the statistics for the Church of God (New Dunkers) for the year 1926 is presented in Table 1, which shows also the distribution of these figures between urban and rural territory. All of the organizations reported in 1926 and in 1916 were in the State of Indiana.

The membership of the Church of God (New Dunkers) comprises baptized believers who have been enrolled as members upon personal profession of faith. Baptism is by immersion.

TABLE 1.—SUMMARY OF STATISTICS FOR CHURCHES IN URBAN AND RURAL TERRITORY, 1926: CHURCH OF GOD (NEW DUNKERS)

ITEM	Total	In urban territory ¹	In rural territory ¹	PER CENT OF TOTAL ²	
				Urban	Rural
Churches (local organizations)	9	3	6		
Members	650	137	513	21.1	78.9
Average per church.....	72	46	86		
Membership by sex:					
Male.....	270	71	199	26.3	73.7
Female.....	305	66	239	21.6	78.4
Sex not reported.....	75		75		
Males per 100 females.....	88.5	(³)	83.3		
Membership by age:					
Under 13 years.....	9	7	2		
13 years and over.....	566	130	436	23.0	77.0
Age not reported.....	75		75		
Per cent under 13 years ⁴	1.6	5.1	0.5		
Church edifices:					
Number.....	9	3	6		
Value—Churches reporting	9	3	6		
Amount reported.....	\$26,000	\$8,500	\$17,500	32.7	67.3
Average per church.....	\$2,889	\$2,833	\$2,917		
Debt—Churches reporting	1	1			
Amount reported.....	\$200	\$200		100.0	
Churches reporting "no debt" on church edifice.....	8	2	6		
Expenditures during year:					
Churches reporting.....	9	3	6		
Amount reported	\$4,006	\$1,688	\$2,322	42.0	58.0
Current expenses and improvements.....	\$3,378	\$1,406	\$1,972	41.6	58.4
Benevolences, missions, etc.....	\$327	\$277	\$50	84.7	15.3
Not classified.....	\$300		\$300		100.0
Average expenditure per church.....	\$445	\$561	\$387		
Sunday schools:					
Churches reporting.....	9	3	6		
Officers and teachers.....	95	28	67		
Scholars.....	531	183	348	34.5	65.5

¹ Urban territory includes all cities and other incorporated places which had 2,500 inhabitants or more in 1920, the date of the last Federal census; rural territory comprises the remainder of the country.

² Per cent not shown where base is less than 100.

³ Ratio not shown, the number of females being less than 100.

⁴ Based on membership with age classification reported.

The data given for 1926 represent 9 active churches of the Church of God (New Dunkers), with 650 members. The classification of membership by sex and by age was reported by 8 churches, including, however, only 2 which reported any members under 13 years of age. No parsonages were reported.

Comparative data, 1916-1926.—Table 2 presents, in convenient form for comparison, a summary of the available statistics of this denomination for the censuses of 1926 and 1916. Although it is probable that this denomination existed prior to 1916, no statistics were furnished for 1906.

TABLE 2.—COMPARATIVE SUMMARY, 1926 AND 1916: CHURCH OF GOD
(NEW DUNKERS)

ITEM	1926	1916
Churches (local organizations)	9	13
Increase ¹ over preceding census:		
Number.....	-4	
Per cent.....	(²)	
Members	650	929
Increase ¹ over preceding census:		
Number.....	-279	
Per cent.....	-30.0	
Average membership per church.....	72	71
Church edifices:		
Number.....	9	13
Value—Churches reporting.....	9	13
Amount reported.....	\$26,000	\$28,000
Average per church.....	\$2,889	\$2,154
Debt—Churches reporting.....	1	
Amount reported.....	\$200	
Expenditures during year:		
Churches reporting.....	9	11
Amount reported.....	\$4,005	\$5,243
Current expenses and improvements.....	\$3,378	\$4,743
Benevolences, missions, etc.....	\$327	\$500
Not classified.....	\$300	
Average expenditure per church.....	\$445	\$477
Sunday schools:		
Churches reporting.....	9	12
Officers and teachers.....	95	115
Scholars.....	531	799

¹ A minus sign (-) denotes decrease.

² Per cent not shown, base being less than 100.

HISTORY, DOCTRINE, AND ORGANIZATION¹

The Church of God (New Dunkers) was organized in 1848 by George Patton, Peter Eyman, and others, who withdrew from the German Baptist Brethren. The church claims that "Bible things should be called by Bible names" and that the Bible name for the church, foretold by prophecy as the new name, is "The Church of God." It refuses to adopt a human creed or confession of faith, as the Scriptures are given to this end and are infallibly right. Baptism (a burial or birth of water) is administered to those who profess faith in Christ and experience sorrow for sin, that they may receive the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost. The observance of the communion, the literal washing of the saints' feet, the salutation of the kiss, and the anointing of the sick are held to be essential; and the second Advent of the Lord, and future rewards and punishments are taught.

An annual conference is held. Home missionary work is under the care of the mission board. There is no educational or philanthropic work.

¹ This statement, which is substantially the same as that published in Part II of the Report on Religious Bodies, 1916, has been approved in its present form by Alvin Hall, moderator, Monticello, Ind.