

NEWSLETTER

LHSMA Spring Program Recap: 500th Anniversary of the Reformation

Tuesday, April 25, 2017

by Steve Herr

The Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic met on April 25, 2017 for its annual program and meeting.



This year's theme centered on the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. Society board members the Reverend Dr. Maria Erling and Dr. Phil Teigen presented on the theme to around 100 attendees.

Erling began the day with a presentation entitled "*Reformation Celebrations in American History*." The Gettysburg seminary professor helped the audience see the changing way Lutherans in American had observed the 300th and 400th anniversary. She made the keen insight that this current observance takes place after the ecumenical movement of the twentieth century and as such shapes the current celebration in new ways which are more conciliar and less triumphant.

Phil Teigen followed with the paper "*Bringing Martin Luther to Washington, DC*." He concentrated his remarks on the Luther statue placed in front of Luther Place Memorial Church on Massachusetts Avenue at Thomas Circle. Promoted by prominent Gen-

eral Synod pastors, Rev. John George Butler (Washington, D.C.) and Rev. John G. Morris (Baltimore), the statue was funded and placed in 1884, by the Luther Statue Association. A "Feast of Unveiling" drew national and local political figures, about one hundred identifiable Lutheran pastors as participants or guests, and as many as 10,000 spectators. The unveiling of this "colossal" statue expressed intentions, attitudes, and commitments about Martin Luther and about the future of Lutherans in America. Teigen noted "In their enthusiasm for American and Lutheran history, however, some Gilded Age Lutherans walked on the dark side of American life, that is, with white supremacy and Jim Crow." Ultimately, the history of the Great Reformer's statue—still residing prominently in the Nation's capital—provides 21st-century Lutherans with a reminder and opportunity to examine for themselves the nature of the contemporary Lutheran church and its stance towards American history, American politics, and the American nation-state.

The morning-long program concluded with Dr. Jill Oglie Titus introducing Pastors Sean Titus, Jackie Roderick, and Adam Morton. Each shared how local congregations were observing the Reformation.

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *Spring program included focus on Luther statue in Washington, DC*
- *Wentz paper written on Norwegian-American Lutheran history*
- *First female pastor ordained in the Lutheran church in North America, October 7, 1970.*
- *Lutheran biographies needed for LHSMA website*
- *All LHSMA officers re-elected to another term*



President's Corner - Summer 2017

Each year on July 1-3 the borough of Gettysburg hosts a wide array of activities, encampments, reenactments, special battle walks, and



tours in remembrance of the Battle of Gettysburg fought on those days in 1863. As a

Gettysburg resident for 26 years, I have found many of these observances meaningful and enriching. As an historian, it is exciting to witness adults and children interested and fascinated by history. The wide variety of events connect with different segments of visitors. Some people prefer a more scholarly tour by Licensed Battlefield Guide or National Park Service Ranger. Others enjoy living historian encampments and the opportunity to engage living historians in their 1863 context. Others like museums or a film.

I often find myself wondering how Lutherans might find multiple ways to connect more deeply with

people of all ages around the rich and

interesting history of Lutheranism in the Mid-Atlantic region. The society offers scholarly programming, encourages scholarship through our prizes, and engages people in pilgrimages or trips to Lutheran historical sites. Our challenge remains the same to find ways to promote and encourage a deeper appreciation for history. The 500th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation later this year provides us with an opportunity to build on that energy and visibility. The upcoming bicentennial of the founding of the General Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in 2020 is another.

This society fulfills a needed role in Mid-Atlantic Lutheranism. It advocates for, encourages, and instills an interest in Lutheran history in this area. I remain convinced we can do more to connect modern Lutherans with their past and deliver it in ways that shape their present perspectives.

"This society fulfills a needed role... It advocates for, encourages, and instills an interest in Lutheran history in this area."

A challenge remains as to how we can foster an interest in Lutheran history with younger generations.

How can you help? Our board wel-

comes input from the membership. Send your suggestions, ideas, and thoughts to info@lutheranhistoricalsociety.org.

Consider getting involved as a board member or by serving on one of our board committees. Invite others to join the society and support its mission.

Together we can contribute to the life and faith of today's church by learning and sharing our history.

Sincerely,

Pastor Stephen R. Herr,
LHSMA President

"This grace of God is a very great, strong, mighty and active thing. It does not lie asleep in the soul. Grace hears, leads, drives, draws, changes, works all in man, and lets itself be distinctly felt and experienced. It is hidden, but its works are evident."

— Martin Luther

Welcome New Members

LHSMA welcomes the following new members to the Society:

Annual Memberships:

Stephen Boyhont - *Lititz, PA*
Ed Spannaus - *Lovettsville, VA*
Johnnie Plank - *York, PA*
Louise Meledin - *Towson, MD*

Life Memberships:

Rev. Kenneth Senft - *Harrisburg, PA*
(upgrade from Annual Member)

Please notify us of any corrections.

by Jim Mummert

LHSMA 2017 - 2018 Board of Directors

Board Members

Stephen Herr
President
Mark Oldenburg
Vice President

John Deeben
Secretary
Lee Knepp
Treasurer

B. Bohleke
Historian/Archivist
Marianne Brock
Jane English

Maria Erling
John Fehring
David E. Flesner
Kevin Hepler

James A. Mummert
Jill Oglie Titus
Paul Tomkiel

Board Emeriti

Susan Hill
Donald Housley
Michael J. Kurtz

LHSMA Announces A.R. Wentz Prize Winner

By Steve Herr

The Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic announces the winner of the 2016 A.R.Wentz Prize in American Lutheran History.

Seminarian Hans Becklin, a third-year seminarian at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago (LSTC), won for his paper “Herbjorn Gausta’s Good Shepherd (1895) at First Lutheran Church, Decorah, Iowa: Printed American Visual Culture as Painted Norwegian-American Propaganda.”

Society president Stephen Herr indicated the panel of judges commented on how Becklin presented “a rather complicated development in Norwegian-American Lutheran history, using this painting as his text.” Becklin drew from “several seemingly disparate places” painting a story that “is both beautifully and effectively told.” On receiving the news Becklin shared that “he was truly honored to receive the prize.” The society offers the prize every year for papers addressing Lutheranism in North America.

Becklin, a lifelong Lutheran, was raised among Norwegian Lutherans in south-central Wisconsin. Interested in history and research from an early age, he majored in history at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. At Luther, he focused on the history of Lutheranism in America and on the history of art. These two areas combined well during his grant-funded research on First Lutheran Church in Decorah, the Norwegian Synod, and Herbjørn Gausta, supervised by Dr. Kate Elliott and Dr. Edward Tebbenhoff. Throughout seminary he has continued to explore church history. Hans is a member of the ELCA’s Church Council, which provides legislative leadership between Churchwide Assemblies. He is

the council’s representative to the Moravian Church in North America. He and his wife, Marissa, live in Chicago and both are preparing for ordained ministry in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

Abdel Ross Wentz, for whom the award is named, was a leading figure in 20th century Lutheranism. From 1916-1956 he was a professor of Church History and later President of Gettysburg Theological Seminary. He was the first Vice-President of the Lutheran World Federation and the lead writer of its first constitution. The Wentz family established an endowment to provide prize money for the best historical paper on Lutheranism in North America. The prize can be awarded each year in two categories: 1) first degree seminarian and 2) M.A or PH.D graduate students. The prize is in the amount of \$2,500. Read more about it on the Society website: www.lutheranhistoricalsociety.com

The society also announces a call for papers for the 2017 prize. Any first degree seminary student regardless of denominational affiliation and anyone enrolled in a higher degree program at the M.A. or PhD level are eligible to apply. Paper topics should be historical papers on some aspect of Lutheranism in North America. Full details can be found on the society’s webpage.

Questions can be directed to Pastor Stephen Herr, President of the Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic, 717-334-5212, info@lutheranhistoricalsociety.com or Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic, 61 Seminary Ridge, Gettysburg, PA 17325.

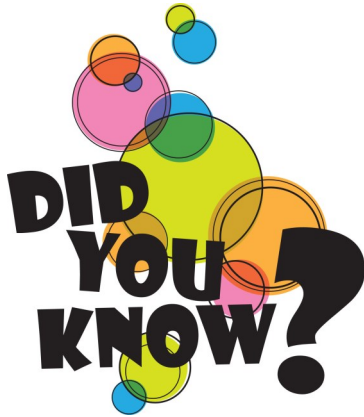


Hans Becklin and Pastor Huebner

Some Timely Lutheran Ephemera

By Phil Teigen

At the Wentz Library book sale in April, 2017, I purchased a twenty-four-page pamphlet entitled “The Role of Women in the Life of the Church.” It caught my attention because it was prepared and distributed for the 1970 Biennial convention of the Lutheran



Church in America (LCA), meeting that summer in Minneapolis. At this convention, the LCA changed its constitution to allow the ordination of women. On Nov. 22 of that same year, the Maryland Synod of the LCA ordained the first Lutheran woman in the United States, Elizabeth A. Platz. A Lutheran chaplain at the University of Maryland, College Park, Platz was a 1965 graduate of the Lutheran School of Theology, Gettysburg. Her ordination took place in the University of Maryland’s Memorial Chapel. The Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic has just recognized this Chapel as its ninth site highly significant for the history of Lutheranism. Besides the pamphlet’s importance as an historical artifact, its lucid and carefully written text provides a good starting place for studying the history of gender equality among Lutherans in the United States.

Another 1970 artifact is the program for the Nov. 22 ordination service [*opposite page*]. It provides specific and detailed information about that day’s officiants and participants: Rev. Robert T. Gribbon (Master of Ceremonies); Rev. Richard L. Eslinger (Crucifer); Mr. James Caspar (Acolyte); The Lutheran Theological Seminary Choir; Robert S. Clippinger (Organist); Rev. Arnold F. Keller, Jr., (Liturgist); Rev. Wofford K. Smith (Liturgist); Jerry Kress, Ph.D. (Reader); Charles Bishop, Ph.D. (Reader); Rev. Donald R. Heiges (Preacher); Rev. Theodore R. Casper (Presenter); Rev. Paul M. Orso (Ordaining Officer); and Rev. Gilbert E. Doan, Jr. (Celebrant).

A third artifact pertaining to this ordination is Rev. Heiges typescript sermon, “Our Ministry Together.” This sermon—by the President of the Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg—yields

insight into what he felt and thought about Lutheran ordination in general and this one in particular. Although he mentions “the womanhood of the ordained,” he does not “highlight” it. What he does highlight is “the long and honorable tradition” of ordaining Lutheran pastors over 250 years of American history. He also highlights the rarity of an ordination “on the basis of a call to the campus ministry.” Finally, he highlights the importance of university chaplaincies: “In this period of turmoil in the university it is especially important that the Church be there as the bearer of God’s judgment and God’s Grace.” The rest of his sermon is an enlightening and traditional exposition of Ephesians 4:1-7, and 11-13. Rev. Heiges then concludes with these historic words:

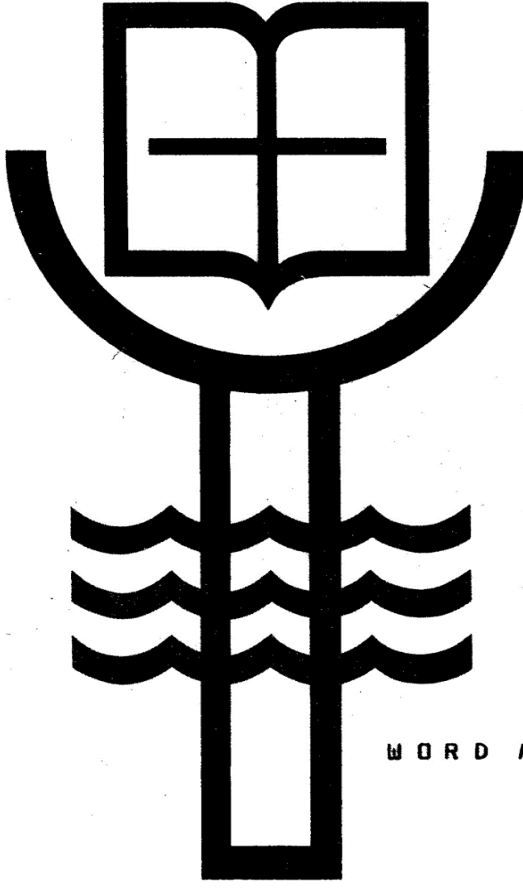
Let us proceed with her ordination.

And let us seal her ordination with the celebration of the Eucharist—the gracious sign of his Holy Presence and the promise of his coming. Even so, come Lord Jesus!

Ephemera is “...created to meet an array of immediate needs, usually transitory in nature, and is not intended to be saved...” The Sunday bulletin, an organ concert program, a treasurer’s statement handed out at a congregational meeting, and—for some pastors, perhaps all—their sermons. Because ephemera rarely survives its moment in time, it can be especially valuable for historical research when it does. That is the case with the three examples just noted. They reveal important details about the 1970 ordination, supplementing the more conventional sources, newspapers, magazines, oral histories, and televised news.

Ephemera is not always as fruitful for historical research as these three pieces turned out to be. It is always worth looking for, however. When you next visit the Wentz Library’s book sale be sure to pause by its ephemera table to see what Lutheran flotsam and jetsam have washed up there.

Source of quotation: Library of Congress, “Introduction to Printed Ephemera Collection” (<https://www.loc.gov/collections/broadsides-and-other-printed-ephemera/articles-and-essays/introduction-to-printed-ephemera-collection/>), accessed 5/6/2017.



THE
ORDINATION
of
ELIZABETH A. PLATZ
TO THE
MINISTRY
OF
WORD AND SACRAMENT

by
The Reverend Paul M. Orso, Ph.D., D.D.
President, Maryland Synod
Lutheran Church in America
November 22, 1970

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND MEMORIAL CHAPEL COLLEGE PARK

Program for the November 22, 1970 ordination service of Elizabeth Platz, described in more detail in the article on page 4.

The Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic will hold a fall program on October 7, 2017 at Memorial Chapel on the campus of the University of Maryland in College Park, Maryland. The program will commemorate the 1970 ordination of Rev. Elizabeth Platz as the first female pastor ordained in the Lutheran Church in North America, and will also feature the historic site recognition of Memorial Chapel, the site where Elizabeth Platz was ordained. A catered reception will follow the historic site plaque unveiling. Please watch the mail for more specific program details, speakers, and registration materials in summer 2017.

Elizabeth Platz will preside at the communion service at the seminary on the following evening.

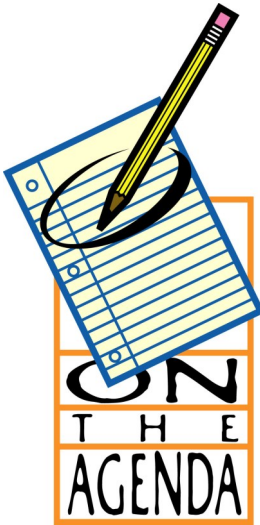
David Day Gravesite Rededication: Shown (left to right): Maureen Ries, Dr. Robert Bradford, Carol Bradford (seated), and Rodney Ries attending a brief ceremony held Sunday afternoon, May 21, 2017 for the replacement of a Lutheran Historical Society marker at the gravesite of missionary Rev. David O. Day, D.D. The replacement marker had been provided through the Historic Site Committee of our Society, and placed by Charles "Bo" Fasold at the Day family gravesite located in Union Cemetery, which overlooks the Susquehanna University campus, at Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania. At the ceremony, Dr. Bradford offered brief remarks concerning the career and sacrifices of Rev. Day and his family, and he and Maureen Ries poignantly offered a hymn in tribute to Day.



LHSMA Board Happenings

By John Deeben

The Board of Directors of the Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic met in Valentine Hall, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, on May 24, 2017. Vice President Mark Oldenburg welcomed the assembled board. After approval of the meeting agenda, the board proceeded to reorganize for the next year. Vice President Oldenburg facilitated officer nominations for 2017-18. All current officers were willing to serve another term, including Steve Herr as president, Mark Oldenburg as vice president, John Deeben as secretary, Lee Knepp as treasurer, and B. Bohleke as archivist/historian. Each officer was approved on separate votes.



President Herr thanked all board members for their service, and welcomed Paul Tomkiel to the board. He also reported that information on the Biglerville prize winners is being finalized for the newsletter. President Herr thanked the committee for their diligent work. He also noted that *Living Lutheran* picked up the information about the Wentz Prize. Vice President Oldenburg reported that newly-elected board member Jon Diefenthaler had to decline his election to the board due to renewed teaching responsibilities for the next academic year at Concordia Seminary in St Louis. His seat will remain vacant until the next regular board election. Secretary Deeben set July 1 as the submis-

sion deadline for the summer newsletter. Reports will be needed for the Wentz and Biglerville winners, a recap of the spring program, and a write-up about the upcoming fall program. Treasurer Knepp presented a financial report for January 1 through May 15, 2017, as well as copies of reports for 2016 and 2015 for comparison. Latest valuations for the prize funds were only available through December 2016. Archivist B. Bohleke reported everything is going well, assistant archivist Sheila Joy is keeping on top of the society's materials and is working on a finding aid. Under committee reports, the following action item was approved by majority vote:

- \$50 honorariums to be given to the participants of the women's panel during the fall program in College Park, Maryland, on October 7, 2017.

Under Old Business: Lee Knepp reported on the David Day marker rededication event that took place in Selinsgrove on May 21, it was small in attendance but very pleasant.

Under New Business: President Herr initiated a general review of goals for the society in the upcoming year. For membership, at least a 10% increase (a goal of 12 new members). Herr voiced the hope that the Wentz prize will continue to spur interest in Lutheran scholarship, and encouraged board members to promote the prize and be mentors to potential authors. Mark Oldenburg raised the possibility of forming a Lutheran historical roundtable to meet several times a year to foster scholarship and sociability.

The board meeting adjourned at 11:45AM.

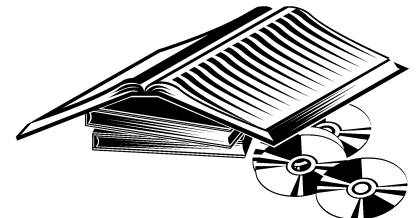
FEATURED LUTHERANS:

Help us grow the number of Lutheran biographies on our website!

The society's webpage contains a section entitled "Featured Lutherans." It has short biographies of Lutherans from the Mid-Atlantic region. We would like to include more so visitors to the site can learn more about our Lutheran history and heritage. To submit one, email it to info@lutheranhistoricalsociety.com. Submissions should be approximately 150 words. Contact Stephen Herr at the above email address if you have questions.

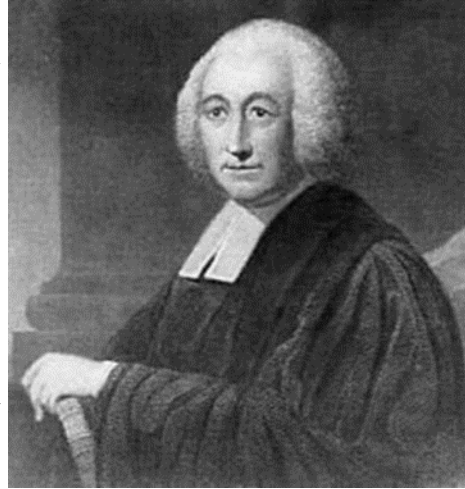
For a sample biography, see the accompanying sketch on Henry Melchior Muhlenberg.

Church Archives



Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg Biography

Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg, considered to be the patriarch of the Lutheran Church in the United States, was born September 16, 1711 in Einbeck, Hanover, Germany. A graduate of the Georg-August University of Göttingen in 1738, Muhlenberg studied theology at the University of Halle. In 1742 he immigrated to Philadelphia in response to an official request from Pennsylvania Lutherans for professional clergy.



He served the Lutheran congregation at Trappe, Montgomery County, and in 1748 established the Ministerium of Pennsylvania, the first permanent Lutheran synod in America. He helped to prepare a uniform Lutheran liturgy, developed basic tenets for an ecclesiastical constitution (adopted at the time by only a small number of Lutheran congregations), and contributed much to the publication of a Lutheran hymnal by the Ministerium in 1786. Muhlenberg also traveled extensively along the east coast, serving as the leader of new congregations from Maryland to New York. His family had a significant impact on colonial life in North America. In addition to Henry's role in the Lutheran church, his children became pastors, military officers, and politicians.

Henry Muhlenberg died October 7, 1787 at Trappe, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania.



MISSION AND PURPOSE

LHSMA's Purpose:

The mission of the Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic is to preserve, to document, and to stir interest in the rich Lutheran traditions which are the foundation of the church. Specifically, the Society intends to foster knowledge and use of Lutheran history in the synods and congregations and among individuals.

The Society carries out its mission by:

- Encouraging the collection and preservation of archival materials;
- Stimulating interest in synodical and congregational history;
- Assisting scholarly research;
- Publishing a newsletter; and
- Maintaining communication with others active in the field of Lutheran church history.

Annual Meeting Report, April 25, 2017

By John Deeben

President Steve Herr called the annual meeting to order at 11:50 AM in the Chapel of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg and welcomed the membership. President Herr determined that a quorum for the meeting existed, and a motion to accept the meeting agenda as submitted was made by Lee Knepp, seconded by Jon Peterson. The minutes from the April 19, 2016, annual meeting were approved on motion of David Flesner, seconded by Robert Herr.

Under officer's reports, President Herr presented current membership statistics, which showed to date 25 member renewals, 33 LIFE members, 4 new members, and 37 complimentary memberships (including new seminarians and new pastors to Region 8), for a total of 99 mem-

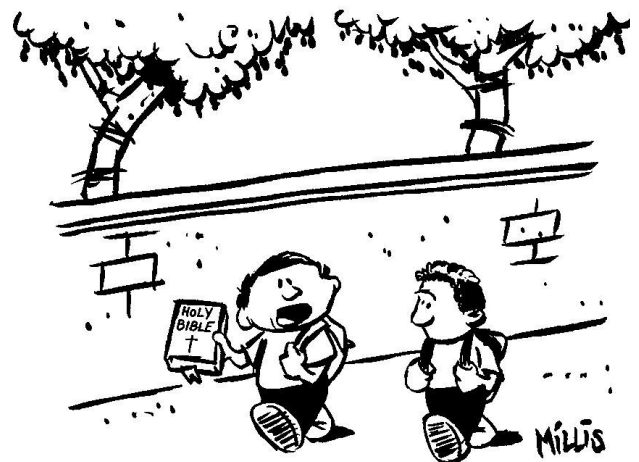
bers. There are 10 members who have not yet renewed for 2017, and 5 institutional renewals. President Herr also invited the membership to submit bios of prominent Mid-Atlantic Lutherans for the society's Featured Lutheran section of the website. Herr also expressed appreciation to present board members for their efforts to support the work of the society, and acknowledged in memoriam the recent passing of former board member Barbara Luebbe. He also recognized new members who were attending their first annual meeting. Speaking for society Archivist/Historian B. Bohleke, President Herr noted efforts made over the past year to organize the society's historical records and capture the history of the society. Treasurer Lee Knepp submitted a written report on the Society's finances from January 1 to April 18, 2017. The financial condition of the society remains stable.

Award Updates: President Herr noted the winners of the 2016 AR Wentz prize (Hans Becklin) and 2017 St. Paul/Biglerville prize (Mark Grandquist and Tim Townsend)—see separate articles in this issue for additional details—as well as the selections of Salem Lutheran Church, Lebanon, PA, and Memorial Chapel, University of Maryland at College Park, for the 2017 Historic Site Recognition program. Entries for the 2018 Wentz Prize are due on August 31, 2017. A program to present the site plaque to Memorial Chapel will be held on October 7. Herr also

noted the resetting of the historic site marker at the David A. Day Site at Union Cemetery in Selinsgrove, PA, which had fallen apart.

Under new business, Vice President Mark Oldenburg reported for the Nominating Committee. The committee presented the following names to fill 5 open seats on the board for a 3-year term, including B. Bohleke, Marianne Brock, John Deeben, John Diefenthaler, and Lee Knepp, as well as Paul Tomkiel to serve the remaining year of an unexpired term. The floor was then opened for additional nominations. There being none, nominations were closed on motion by Jane English, seconded by Jill Oglie Titus. A motion to approve the slate of candidates by acclimation was made by David Flesner, seconded by Jim Mummert.

Announcements for the good of the order: Vice President Mark Oldenburg noted that Elizabeth Platz will preside at the communion service at the seminary on the following evening, and that Barbara Luebbe's ashes will be the first to be interred in the new memorial garden at the seminary. The annual meeting adjourned about 12:20 PM on motion of Darcy Reis, seconded by Mark Oldenburg.



"Pastor says all the answers are in here. I guess he never had to take one of Miss Hathorne's geography exams."



Lutheran Historical Society Of the Mid-Atlantic

Application for Membership/Membership Renewal

(Please submit this Annual Membership Renewal form.)

(Please print or write clearly. Thank you!)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Congregation (*if applicable*): Please list name, town, and denomination.

I desire membership in LHSMA as a ____ New Member or as a ____ Renewal.

Date of application: _____

____ \$250 Life Membership for an individual or institution

____ \$ 20 Annual Membership for an individual or institution

(Annual membership is for a calendar year.)

____ I wish to give a donation to the society (see below for details). Amount \$ _____

I am interested in the following:

____ Research

____ Reading

____ Publishing

____ Other: _____

Financial gifts to further the work of the Society are always welcome and greatly appreciated. Such gifts may be mailed to LHSMA, in care of the treasurer, Lee Knepp, at the address below. LHSMA is a 501C-3 organization and your gift is tax deductible as permitted by law.

Please complete this form and your check made payable to LHSMA. Mail to:

Lee Knepp, LHSMA
P.O. Box 76
McClure, PA 17841

Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic

61 Seminary Ridge
Gettysburg, PA 17325

Email: info@lutheranhistoricalsociety.com
Web: www.lutheranhistoricalsociety.com

*“Preserving, documenting,
and sharing the history of
Lutherans and Lutheranism in
the Mid-Atlantic and
surrounding areas.”*

We're on the Web!

lutheranhistoricalsociety.com

**Lutheran Historical
Society of the
Mid-Atlantic Newsletter**

ISSN 1049-6424

The Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic, in the interest of the preservation and cultivation of Lutheran history in Central and Western Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia, and the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. area issues this newsletter two to three times a year.

Notes of announcements, projects, historical celebrations, genealogical concerns, notes of church or Synodical activities, and notes from other historical societies are solicited.

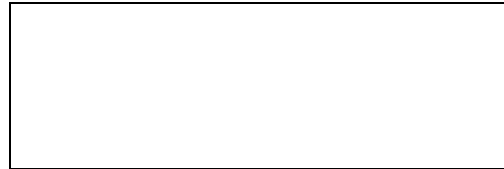
Address corrections are helpful.

Send replies via email to:

Stephen Herr

info@lutheranhistoricalsociety.com

Subject: LHS Newsletter



VOLUME 28, NUMBER 2

Save the Date!

LHSMA Fall Program, October 7, 2017

*The Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic
will hold a fall program on October 7, 2017
at Memorial Chapel on the campus of the*

***University of Maryland in
College Park, Maryland, starting at 2:00PM.***

*The program will commemorate
the 1970 ordination of the Rev. Elizabeth Platz
as the first female pastor ordained in
the Lutheran Church in North America*

*It will include remarks from the Reverend Platz,
a panel discussion on Women's Ordination
and the Ongoing Reformation of the
Church and Society,*

*awarding of LHSMA's historic site
recognition of Memorial Chapel,
the site where Elizabeth Platz was ordained.*

A catered reception will follow.

*Events will conclude around 4:00PM
and are free and open to all.*

*Please watch the mail for more specific
program details, speakers, and
registration materials later this summer.*