

# NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 20, NUMBER 3

FALL / WINTER 2009

## *Lutheran Youth Movement*

### LHSMA Spring 2010 Event

Tuesday, April 20, 2010

Valentine Hall, Lutheran Theological Seminary  
at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

Presenter: Dr. Maria Erling, Associate Professor of the History of Christianity in North America and Global Missions at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg

### Event Schedule

9:00: Registration and Gathering	10:30: Break
9:30: Welcome and Devotions	10:45: Presentation by Dr. Maria Erling
9:45: Presentations by First Prize Recipients in the First Annual LHSMA Youth History Contest (Details on Page 3)	11:30: Question and Answer Session
	11:45: Annual Meeting of the Society
	12:15: Lunch in the Coffee Shop of Valentine Hall

Registration forms will be included in the next newsletter and will be available in late January on the LHSMA website.

*Gettysburg Seminary's Spring Convocation begins later Tuesday afternoon and continues through Wednesday. Presentations and lectures are free and open to the public. Information about the event will be posted on their website at [www.lts.edu](http://www.lts.edu).*

## *LHSMA Announces Two Prize Competitions*

**The Wentz Prize** - for the best essay completed in the 2009-2010 academic year detailing the history of Lutherans in America by a first degree student in a Lutheran Seminary and by a Graduate Student in an American or Canadian University. Each prize carries a \$2,000 award. Submissions are due by May 31, 2010. Articles should be at least 25 double-spaced pages, follow the format stipu-

lated in the most recent guide by Kate Turabian and be accompanied by a short letter of reference from a faculty advisor.

**The St. Paul, Biglerville (PA) Prize** - honoring the late Rev. Fred Weiser, for the best book published in the last two years about the history of Lutherans in America. The prize carries a \$3,000 award. Nominations are due by May 31, 2010.

Submissions and nominations should be sent to:

Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic  
c/o Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg  
61 Seminary Ridge  
Gettysburg, PA 17325

Or to:  
[dhousley@verizon.net](mailto:dhousley@verizon.net)

Don Housley,  
Secretary, LHSMA

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

President's Corner	2
Youth History Contest	3
Dr. Erling's Background	3
Congregational Heritage Workshops Summary	4
Luther Place Recognized	5
LHSMA Membership Renewal Form	6



### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- LHSMA welcomes five new members
- Young people encouraged to submit multi-media presentation of congregation's history
- Participants from three states gather for 2009 Congregational Heritage Workshops
- Luther Place - first English language Lutheran congregation in Washington, DC

## President's Corner

Greetings to you from Gettysburg where the changing leaves are reminding us of the beauty of God's creation. I hope this finds you all enjoying these beautiful autumn days!

In 1961 Charles A. Baier, Jr. fulfilled his requirements for the Bachelor of Divinity degree at Gettysburg Seminary by writing a thesis entitled the *History of the Lutheran Historical Society with an Alphabetical List of some of the Material in Fifty-Two of the Bound Volumes of Miscellaneous Pamphlets*. Recently I read Baier's thesis in order to learn more about the society's history. The society's history is an interesting one and includes the names of many familiar mid-Atlantic Lutherans from the mid-nineteenth century. Samuel Simon Schmucker, Charles Philip Krauth, John G. Morris, Milton Valentine, and Benjamin Kurtz were all participants and in some cases leaders of the society. The society normally

met once a year as part of the annual gathering of the General Synod. In the beginning the society was primarily interested in acquiring books, pamphlets, and articles written about or by Lutherans. It also encouraged pastors and others to write congregational histories. The society's collection of books was eventually turned over to the seminary library and thus

assisted in growing its collection.

When Baier wrote his thesis in 1961 the society had been dormant since 1952. The seminarian indicated the hope that his thesis would spark a new interest in the Lutheran Historical Society.

As 2009 comes to a close and the society's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its reorganization concludes, I would note that Baier's hope has been realized. The society is active and working hard to cultivate interest in Lutheran history. I want to thank the board of directors and members of the society for their diligence and hard work in helping to advance the society's ef-

orts to promote Lutheran history in the Mid-Atlantic region. Numerous new members, a brand new youth history contest, the A. R. Wentz and St. Paul, Biglerville Prizes, and a revamped website and newsletter are all

signs that the society is working hard to fulfill its mission.

I believe the society has an important role within the Lutheran Church to promote history and archives preservation. I hope you will support these endeavors. The society's board of directors is in need of several more directors to bring the

board up to full strength. I encourage you to renew your membership and recruit others to join and support the society and its mission. It is also my hope that the newly launched youth history contest will benefit from your encouragement to young people to get involved and submit a project.

Our annual gathering will be on Tuesday morning, April 20, 2010 at Gettysburg Seminary. I hope to see you then. In the meantime, have a joyous and blessed Advent and Christmas as well as a safe and healthy winter.

Sincerely in Christ,

**Stephen Herr**

President



*"I believe the society has an important role within the Lutheran Church to promote history and archives preservation. I hope you will support these endeavors."*

### Welcome New Members

LHSMA welcomes the following new members:

#### New Life Members:

J. Andrew Heaton - Gettysburg, PA  
Kevin M. Hepler - Mechanicsburg, PA

#### New Members:

Jane Brown - Lancaster, PA  
P. Robert Herr - Millersville, PA  
Ronald Rock - Gettysburg, PA



*Merry Christmas and a Happy and Blessed New Year . . . from LHSMA*

### LHSMA 2009 - 2010 Board of Directors

#### Officers

Stephen Herr  
President  
John Deeben  
Vice President

Donald Housley  
Secretary  
Lee Knepp  
Treasurer

#### Other Board Members

Maria Erling  
George Handley  
Susan Hill  
Barbara Luebbe  
George Mocko

#### Board Emeriti

Charles Glatfelter  
Michael Kurtz  
Fred Wentz

# *Youth History Contest Launched*

## THE LUTHERAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE MID-ATLANTIC INVITES MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH TO PARTICIPATE IN A MULTI-MEDIA CONTEST

The LHSMA Board of Directors has launched a Youth History Contest to promote young people's interest in church history and historical resources. Details of the project are listed below and members of the society are encouraged to share this information with pastors, youth advisors and young people in their congregations.

Prepare a 15-20 minute DVD or PowerPoint presentation with an accompanying script entitled:

### MY CONGREGATION'S STORY

*or*

### MY CONGREGATION'S YOUTH MINISTRY STORY

Three winners in both the Middle (6-8) School category and the High School (9-12) category:

- First Place: \$125 for the winner in each category plus the opportunity to present projects at the LHSMA Spring Program April 20, 2010, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg.
- Second Place: \$75.
- Third Place: \$50.

Submissions are due (postmarked) by **March 1, 2010**. Please mail completed work along with an application form (available at [www.lhsmidatlantic.org](http://www.lhsmidatlantic.org)) to: LHSMA, 61 Seminary Ridge, Gettysburg, PA 17325.

See [www.lhsmidatlantic.org](http://www.lhsmidatlantic.org) for complete contest details.

Questions can be directed to:

Rev. Stephen Herr, LHSMA President  
[pastor@christgettysburg.org](mailto:pastor@christgettysburg.org)  
717-334-5212

## *Dr. Maria Erling to Present at Spring 2010 LHSMA Event*

The Rev. Dr. Maria E. Erling has taught the History of Christianity in North America and Global Mission at the Seminary since 1999. Her education includes: B.A., Augustana College, Rock Island, IL, 1978; M.Div., Yale Divinity School, 1981; Th.D., Harvard Divinity School, 1996

During the pursuit of her doctoral degree from Harvard University she conducted research in congregational life and immigration in New England. Her dissertation was entitled

"Crafting an Urban Piety: Swedish American Religious Life in New England."

She has served parishes in New England: Trinity Lutheran Church, Worcester, MA and Christ the King, Nashua, NH, and supervised urban ministry for the New England Synod, 1985-1987. She also served the synod as its ecumenical officer 1991-1999. Dr. Erling has served on the executive board of the Augustana Heritage Association, on the Evangelical Lu-

theran Church in America's (ELCA) Archive Advisory Committee, and on the board of the Lutheran Historical Conference.

Dr. Erling co-edited and contributed to *The Role of the Bishop: Changing Models for a Global Church*, Lutheran University Press (2001). She also wrote chapters for *Lutherans Today: American Lutheran Identity in the 21st Century*

(Continued on Page 5)

## 2009 Congregational Heritage Workshops a Big Success

On Saturday, September 19, 2009, the Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic again sponsored one of its well-known signature events, the Congregational Heritage Workshops. Held at Valentine Hall on the campus of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, the workshops promote the study and preservation of Lutheran history in the Mid-Atlantic region, especially in those communities and congregations within the ELCA Region 8. Forty-six participants gathered this year from nearby communities as well as Maryland and Virginia, to hear a variety of workshop sessions about such diverse but staple topics as writing congregational histories, planning significant anniversaries, organizing and preserving records in church archives, library resources for Lutheran history, genealogy, and the study and writing of clergy biographies.

The day began with registration and a very nice continental breakfast at the Coffee Shop in Valentine Hall. Society President Rev. Stephen Herr welcomed the gathering immediately afterwards. Following some logistical announcements about the events for the day from Vice President and workshop co-chair John Deeben, the Rev. George Handley led morning devotions with some very thoughtful comments about how we as Lutherans commemorate important events in the life of the church. Devotions also included some Scripture reading and the singing of the hymn "Clouds of Witnesses Surround Us" by the late Rev. Herman G. Stuempfle.

The first round of morning sessions included an introduction to organizing church archives, presented by John E. Peterson, curator of the Lutheran Archives Center at the Lu-

theran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. Dr. Donald Housley, Emeritus Professor of History at Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove, Pa.,

offered his ever-popular class on the mechanics of researching and writing a coherent, well-organized, congregational history. Elwood Christ, ELCA Region 8 archivist, also led a session on the ways in which genealogy or family history can be

searched in both secular and sacred records. Christ emphasized, in particular, the pitfalls that can emerge while attempting to glean useful information from older church records—the further back you go, the less detailed the records often became—that were often maintained in German rather than English script.

In the second workshop sessions, Peterson continued with the theme of archival preservation, offering basic tips on ways to protect and store records and artifacts that have been deemed historically valuable. Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary staff Dr. Briant Bohleke, Director and Archivist of the A. R. Wentz Library, and the Rev. Dr. Maria Erling, Associate Professor of the History of Christianity in North America and Global Missions, offered an overview of current library resources for the study of Lutheran history, emphasizing the holdings of the Wentz Library.

A time of refreshment and fellowship followed the morning workshops with a catered deli lunch buffet in the Valentine Hall Coffee Shop. Afterwards, Elwood Christ took interested participants on a tour of the Region 8 Archives located in the inner sanctum of the Wentz Library. Everyone received an overview of the process by which retired church and other Synod records find their way into the archives, as well as an insider's glimpse of the archives' often limited space and processing backlog.

The tour reinforced, at least for some, the need for better ELCA support for the Region 8 Archives, so that its mission to preserve and provide access to valuable Lutheran records can continue with greater efficiency.

The afternoon session of the Heritage workshops included yet a third archival class. Offered by John Daggan, archivist of the Metropolitan New York Synod, this class focused on the perennial modern dilemma of electronic archives, specifically the utilization—along with the associated potentials and pitfalls—of electronic methods to capture and preserve vital church data. Society Vice President John Deeben led a workshop on writing pastoral biography, which tied in nicely with the other workshop topics of family and congregational history. Drawing upon his own experience researching and writing about a clergy ancestor, Deeben discussed the basic components of a biography, and pointed out ways to discern details of a pastor's career from a variety of primary and published sources, and how to organize the material into a cohesive narrative. Finally, Rev. George Handley, once again presented his popular workshop on effective ways to plan and organize a meaningful celebration of significant congregational anniversaries. His talk focused on organizing committees, designing events, developing resources, and promoting participation.

The Congregational Heritage Workshops ended with a brief plenary conversation, which offered participants a final opportunity to ask any outstanding questions of the workshop presenters. In all, everyone came away from the event satisfied with the knowledge gained and the fellowship experienced. The Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic will tentatively organize the next edition of the Congregational Heritage Workshops for Fall 2011.

*John Deeben*

### Church Archives



## Luther Place Memorial Church Recognized as Historic Site

On Sunday, July 12 Luther Place Memorial Church in Washington, D.C. became the latest Lutheran location to receive historic site recognition by the society. The presentation was made to Pastor Karen Brau, retiring congregational archivist Sylvia Rortvedt, and to Luther Place and LHSMA member and new congregational archivist Marti Scheel. Representing the society and making the presentation was board member George Handley. Treasurer Lee Knepp was also in attendance and a letter from society president Stephen Herr was shared with the congregation.

Luther Place Memorial Church began in 1873 when its initial worship service was held. Originally it was known as Memorial Evangelical Lutheran Church and was the first English language Lutheran congregation in Washington, D.C. In 1874 the congregation dedicated its first church edifice as a "memorial to God's goodness in delivering the land from slavery and war." After a



*Marti Scheel-Luther Place archivist*

fire in 1904 the church was rededicated in 1905 with then President Theodore Roosevelt providing an address. The congregation has a rich tradition of social ministry and outreach to those in need. It practices the ancient Biblical concept of hospitality-welcoming the stranger. Its many ministries reflect this emphasis and concern for all including the homeless, neglected, and abused women and their families. You can learn more about their rich history and dynamic current ministry at [www.lutherplace.org](http://www.lutherplace.org).



*George Handley-LHSMA Board Member, Pastor Karen Brau-Luther Place pastor, Marti Scheel-Luther Place archivist and LHSMA member, Sylvia Rortvedt-retiring congregational archivist*

## Dr. Erling's Background

*(Continued from Page 3)*

(Eerdmans, 2003), *Witness at the Crossroads* (2001) and *The Augustana Heritage: Recollections, Perspectives, and Prospects* (1998), as well as chapters in recent books on *Spirituality, Swedish Immigration, and Ministry*.

As a part of her ongoing interest in the way that American Lutheranism has developed, Dr. Erling has recently published *The Augustana Story* with co-author Mark Grandquist on the history of the Augustana Evangelical Lutheran Church, one of the churches that eventually merged into the ELCA. The fascinating history of

American Lutheranism, with its many mergers of separate ethnic churches, and its complex engagement with contemporary American culture, gives her plenty of material to work with as she teaches seminarians how to understand, appreciate, and extend the Lutheran tradition to meet the challenges of society today.

Dr. Erling has become known around campus for hosting an annual fish night and bringing back croquet to the campus for the first time since A.R. Wentz regularly engaged in the sport. She lives in Gettysburg with her husband John Spangler, who serves on the seminary staff and their two daughters, Marta and Johanna.

*www.ltsj.edu / Pastor Stephen Herr*

## LHSMA NEWSLETTER

Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic

61 Seminary Ridge  
Gettysburg, PA 17325

Email: [pastor@christgettysburg.org](mailto:pastor@christgettysburg.org)  
Web: [www.lhsmidatlantic.org](http://www.lhsmidatlantic.org)

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

**We're on the Web!**

[www.lhsmidatlantic.org](http://www.lhsmidatlantic.org)

### **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**

**[pastor@christgettysburg.org](mailto:pastor@christgettysburg.org)**

**Subject: LHS Newsletter**

VOLUME 20, NUMBER 3

## Membership Renewal Reminder!

*It's time to renew your membership to LHSMA. If you have not done so, please use this form.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I desire membership in LHS:

As a: \_\_\_\_\_ New Member or, as a: \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal.

\_\_\_\_\_ \$ 250 Life Membership

\_\_\_\_\_ \$ 25 Individual Membership

\_\_\_\_\_ \$ 15 Senior (62+) Membership

\_\_\_\_\_ \$ 15 Student Membership

\_\_\_\_\_ \$ 25 Institutional Membership

\_\_\_\_\_ \$ 50 Contribution Membership

*(All memberships, except Life, are renewable annually.)*

\_\_\_\_\_ I wish to give a Special Gift. Please send me more information on the Special Gift Program of the society.

I am interested in:

\_\_\_\_\_ Research

\_\_\_\_\_ Reading

\_\_\_\_\_ Publishing

\_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form and your check made payable to **LHSMA**:

Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic

61 Seminary Ridge

Gettysburg, PA 17325

Fall / Winter 2009