



# **Lutheran Historical Society** **Of the Mid-Atlantic**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

## **Lutheran Historical Society announces A.R. Wentz Prize Winner**

The Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic announces the winner of the A.R. Wentz Prize in American Lutheran History. The Reverend Benjamin Phelps, pastor at Grace Lutheran Church in Kenai, Alaska, won for his paper "Awakened to Confessional: The Doctrinal Development of F.C.D. Wyneken and its Place in the Course of Lutheranism in America." Phelps submitted the paper while in his final year of theological studies at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary located in Mequon, Wisconsin. On receiving the news, Phelps expressed his appreciation and gratitude to the society, which offers the prize every year for papers addressing Lutheranism in North America.

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 the prize and the work of the Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic on its web site: [www.lutheranhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.lutheranhistoricalsociety.com)

Phelps was born in Manitowoc, Wisconsin spending his childhood in Plymouth, Wisconsin. He is a graduate of Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. He spent his vicar year at Resurrection Lutheran Church in Verona, Wisconsin. A descendant of 19<sup>th</sup> Century Lutheran clergymen and leaders F.C.D. Wyneken and August Craemer, Phelps has an interest in his family roots and 19<sup>th</sup> century Lutheranism writing several papers and articles on the topic. He is married to Molly (Graumann) and they have one daughter (Emma) and another daughter is expected in March 2019. He serves at Grace Lutheran Church in Kenai, Alaska, a congregation associated with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS).

The society also announces a call for papers for the 2019 prize. Any first degree seminary student regardless of denominational affiliation and anyone enrolled in a higher degree program at the M.A. or Ph.D. 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, 334-5212, [info@lutheranhistoricalsociety.com](mailto:info@lutheranhistoricalsociety.com) or Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic, 61 Seminary Ridge, Gettysburg, PA 17325.

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