

# NEWSLETTER

## IMPORTANT NOTICE: LHSMA Spring Program Cancelled Annual Meeting Postponed

LHSMA regrets to announce that our 2020 Spring Program scheduled for March 28, featuring the Congregational Heritage Workshops, has been cancelled and the Annual Meeting will be postponed due to the expanding concerns of the Coronavirus pandemic. On March 12, United Lutheran Seminary published notices on its website that both the Gettysburg and Philadelphia campuses would close to the public beginning on March 16. Access would be restricted to current students, faculty, and staff; online instruction would be implemented and continue for the remainder of the semester; all public events are cancelled effective immediately; food service would be unavailable; and no new requests to host events for outside organizations would be accepted. These developments have made it impossible for the Society to move forward with the Spring Program at the present time.

Everyone who has already registered for the event will be issued a re-

fund. We fully expect to reschedule the Congregational Heritage Workshops at a later date, which will be determined after consulting with the presenters to assess their availability. At this point, the most likely scenario will be to reschedule the Workshops for next spring. The annual business meeting, including the election of board members, will be postponed until the fall. It will likely be held during our anticipated event with the Lutheran Historical Conference at the beginning of October.

We apologize for the inconvenience these cancellations may cause but recognize the need to take the current health crisis very seriously for the safety and wellbeing of our members. Information on the rescheduled events will be communicated as they become available. In the meantime, members may direct questions or concerns to any board member or society officer at [info@lutheranhistoricalsociety.com](mailto:info@lutheranhistoricalsociety.com).



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

|                              |     |
|------------------------------|-----|
| President's Corner           | 2   |
| Welcome Newest LHSMA Members | 2   |
| Board Happenings             | 3   |
| John Fehringer Obituary      | 4   |
| Featured Lutherans           | 4,5 |
| George Handley Obituary      | 5   |
| A.R. Wentz Prize Winner      | 6   |
| From the Region 8 Archives   | 8   |



### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *This year we celebrate the 200th anniversary of the founding of the General Synod*
- *Several new members added to LHSMA roles*
- *Historic Site Recognition Committee accepting applications*
- *William A. Passavant: a Pioneer Leader*
- *Reverend Joel Otto wins A.R. Wentz Prize*
- *Archives for Christ, Lutheran Church, Montgomery, PA*



## President's Corner - Spring 2020

Samuel Simon Schmucker founded the Lutheran Historical Society, Gettysburg in 1843. He was born on February 28, 1799 in Hagerstown,



Maryland. I write this column on the 221st anniversary of Schmucker's birth.

Twenty-one years later in 1820 in that same small western Maryland town, The Evangelical Lutheran General Synod of the United States of America was formed. It was the first national Lutheran body to be established.

The General Synod would remain an important part of the Lutheran ecclesiastical landscape until it

merged with the General Council and United Synod South to form the United Lutheran Church in America in 1918. This year we celebrate the 200th anniversary of the General Synod's founding and we give thanks to God for its witness, faithfulness, and service.

Today the funeral service for the Reverend John William Fehringer took place at the Church of the Abiding Presence on the

seminary campus at Gettysburg.

John was a member of the Society's Board of Directors and an advocate for its mission and programs.

In particular, John worked with the historic site recognition program. John appreciated the rich traditions and heritage of Lutheran congregations, especially smaller, rural congregations. He often noted

the wonderful history and legacy of congregations throughout the mid-Atlantic region. John will be missed on the Society's Board of Directors and we give thanks to God for his service to the society. Please keep the Fehringer family and friends in your prayers. *Requiesce in pace, Domine, et lux perpetua luceat ei.* "Eternal rest grant him, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon him."

I encourage you to visit our webpage at [www.Lutheranhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.Lutheranhistoricalsociety.com) to learn more about the society, its mission, and programs. Thank you all for your support of the society!

Sincerely in Christ,

*Pastor Stephen R. Herr,  
LHSMA President*

February 28, 2020

Commemoration of  
Samuel Simon Schmucker

*I encourage you to visit our webpage ... to learn more about the society, its mission, and programs. Thank you all for your support of the society!*

### Welcome New Members

LHSMA welcomes the following new members to the Society:

#### **Congregational LIFE Memberships:**

Salem Lutheran Church - *Lebanon, PA*

St. Phillip's Evangelical Lutheran Church -  
*Baltimore, MD*

#### **Annual Memberships:**

Rev. Hans E. Becklin - *Ephrata, PA*

Sandra Lamenza - *Pillow, PA*

Leon Pisano - *Gettysburg, PA*

#### **Annual Memberships Upgraded to Life Memberships:**

Bishop Matthew L. Riegel, WV-WMD Synod -  
*Morgantown, WV*

Rev. James Fladland - *Watsonstown, PA*

The 2020 Membership Drive concludes on March 31. Members who do not renew their support for the mission of the Society will not receive incessant robot calls, but contacts will be made to remind lapsed members of the joy of giving to the promotion of the variety of ways we celebrate Lutheran history..

*Please notify us of any corrections.*

*by Jim Mummert*

### LHSMA 2019 - 2020 Board of Directors

#### **Board Members**

Stephen Herr

*President*

Mark Oldenburg

*Vice President*

John Deeben

*Secretary*

Lee Knepp

*Treasurer*

Beth Clementson

Maria Erling

David E. Flesner

Andrew Frantz

Kevin Hepler

Louise Meledin

James A. Mummert

Sean Titus

Paul Tomkiel

#### **Board Emeriti**

Susan Hill

Donald Housley

Michael J. Kurtz

# LHSMA Board Happenings

By Mark Oldenburg

The Board of Directors of the Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic met on January 15, 2020. Vice President Mark Oldenburg called the meeting to order at 9:40 AM at Valentine Hall, United Lutheran Seminary.

President Herr welcomed the assembled board members to the meeting and made his report by phone. Included in that report was a recommendation from the Wentz Prize Committee that the prize for PhD candidates be awarded to Joel Otto for "The Church Grows Under the Cross: Wisconsin Synod Mission Expansion into the Sunshine States during the 1950's." The board approved that recommendation and approved the proposal to invite Mr. Otto to the October meeting with the Lutheran Historical Conference for the formal awarding of the prize.

Minutes from the August meeting, were **approved** on motion of Kevin Hepler, seconded by Sean Titus. **Approved.** Mark Oldenburg was designated as acting secretary.

Treasurer Lee Knepp presented a report of the society's financial situation as of December 31, 2019. He further explained the state of conversation with United Lutheran Seminary about the restricted funds managed by them. The apparent significant loss reported at the last meeting seemed to be due to their misreading of the financial reports, but there are still issues remaining, including available income. The committee named to investigate these issues, and to explore whether we are required to lodge these funds with ULS has not yet met but will report to the next meeting. He also reported that the Society needs a vehicle for the investment of proceeds for life memberships which provides greater income than a CD, where they are presently invested.

## Committee Reports:

- **Membership Committee:** Chair Jim Mummert reported that the society added two institutional life members, three new individual life members, and two new annual members. As of January 15, there were 88 individual annual members, 44 life members, and 11 institutional members, for a total of 143 members. The board affirmed that individual memberships can cover couples, and the Member-

ship Committee will change its language so that individual memberships are known as annual household memberships. Life memberships will only cover individuals, and couples who pay for distinct annual memberships will be credited with the second as a donation to the Society.

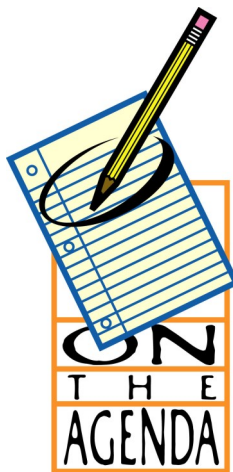
- **Publicity Committee:** Chair Mark Oldenburg reported that publicity regarding the March Congregational Heritage Workshop has been sent to Region 8 synods of the ELCA, as well as to all the ELCA congregations in the region who are approaching major anniversaries (at least those who have an email address). The board members committed to publicizing the event personally and suggested that the committee inform the area judicatories of those denominations in full communion with the ELCA, as well as area local historical societies. The committee will also approach the area districts of the LCMS and the Lutheran Historical Society of Eastern Pennsylvania. Those who might be particularly interested in the recognition of Linwood House as an historical site will receive a special invitation to that event.

- **Program Committee:** Members present reported that the March event has been planned by a special task force (John Deeben, Sheila Joy, David Flesner, and Stephen Herr) [*Now cancelled; pg. 1*], that the gathering with the Lutheran Historical Conference has been set for October 1–3, 2020, and that work has begun on a trip to Trappe in October 2021.

- **Historic Site Recognition Committee** reported that plaques have been ordered for the sites already chosen, and that applications are being accepted for the next site to be chosen. As President Herr suggested, that committee was asked to plan the formal recognition of Linwood House which is to close the March workshop.

The Society's annual meeting will take place on March 28 at the Society's Congregational Heritage Workshop [*now cancelled*]. The Board's organizational meeting to follow elections is scheduled for May 20, 2020. [*Refer to page 1 for new schedule.*]

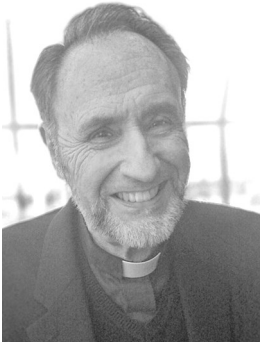
The board meeting adjourned at 11:35 AM.



## Board Member John Fehringer Obituary

*From The Gettysburg Times*

Rev. John “Jack” William Fehringer, 91, passed away peacefully at his home in New Oxford on Friday, February 14, 2020. John was born on January 25, 1929, in Brooklyn, N.Y., the son of the late John W. and Bertha (Touwsma) Fehringer.



John, also known as Jack, was a graduate from Wagner College with a BD in social studies in 1950, and from Lutheran Seminary in Gettysburg in May 1953 with a Master of Divinity degree in systematic theology and or-

drained in 1953 as a pastor of the ULCA. He served at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Dansville, NY, the Nativity Lutheran Church in East Aurora, NY, and Wales Hollow Lutheran Church in Wales Hollow, NY, and after retirement, John served as pastor and interim pastor of a number of congregations in the Upper Susquehanna Synod.

While serving at his many churches, John was quite active in each community. In East Aurora, he co-founded the “FISH” program, established a preschool at Nativity and served as president of the East Aurora

Council of Churches. He was a member of the Lion’s Club in Dansville, secretary and president of the East Aurora Rotary Club and member of the Hunterstown Ruritan Club. He also volunteered at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Gettysburg performing numerous tasks. After volunteering for two years at the Lutheran Theological Seminary, John became a staff member in the development office. He has served as director of the Friends of the Seminary and has conducted tours of the Seminary for numerous visitors, also writing a booklet about the seminary chapel windows. His hobbies included painting, writing, cooking and woodworking.

Jack is survived by his children, Christine H. Powell of Buffalo, NY, John R. Fehringer and his wife Helga of Reykjavik, Iceland, David S. Fehringer and his wife Cindy of Camillus, NY, Steven T. Fehringer and his wife Doris Ann of Gettysburg, and Paul A. Fehringer and his wife Beverly of Delevan, NY; 11 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild; a partner Susan Bonser of Bradenton, Florida; and one brother Robert Fehringer and his wife Joan of Safety Harbor, Florida. He was predeceased by his wife Barbara (Rumpf) Fehringer, and daughter Carol Diane Fehringer.

### A Brief Biography:

## *Henry W.A. Hanson*

Henry Hanson was elected to the presidency of Gettysburg College from his ministry at Messiah Lutheran Church in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. A graduate of Roanoke College and the Lutheran Seminary at Gettysburg, he held numerous honorary degrees. He was highly regarded as a pastor and synodical leader before coming to Gettysburg. The longest-serving president in the history of the College (1923-1952), he secured Gettysburg’s national accreditation by the Association of American Universities.

Hanson has been hailed by many as the president who successfully steered Gettysburg College through the Great Depression, and as an enthusiastic leader who was especially interested in students’ welfare.

Yet in the first decade of his tenure he was an outspoken advocate for a male-only institution before economic necessity led him to change course. “It is a deep conviction of my own that the next departure in modern education will be the endeavor to produce a higher type of manhood,” he told the board of trustees. Eventually, Gettysburg College became fully coeducational in 1935, during Hanson’s tenure.



*By Jean LeGros*



## Former Board Member Rev. George Handley Dies

By John Deeben

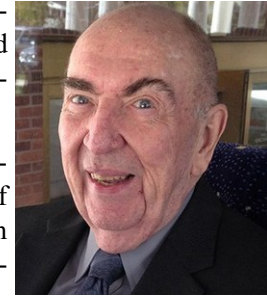
Former LHSMA board member, the Rev. George E. Handley, of The Village at Orchard Ridge in Winchester, VA, died Friday, December 20, 2019 after a brief illness.

George was born April 12, 1930, in Newburgh, New York, to George Elliott and Margaret Dorothy (Strunck) Handley. He graduated from Wagner College, Staten Island, NY, and received his Master of Divinity from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. He was ordained in 1956 through the New York and New England Synod, ULCA. He was married in 1957 to Miriam Miller (Jervis) Handley, currently of Staunton, VA. They shared an almost 40-year marriage and were devoted and loving parents and grandparents.

George was a former president of the Lutheran Archives Center in Philadelphia, served for over two decades on the Archives Center Board, and was also the archivist of the Virginia Synod (ELCA) for 12 years. He also served congregations in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia as well as the Virgin Islands, and served in administrative posi-

tions in the Lutheran Church. In his service on the LHSMA board, George was instrumental in helping to organize the popular Congregational Heritage Workshops and society trips to Trappe, Pennsylvania.

He is survived by his children John Elliott Handley of Falls Church, VA, and Sarah Margaret Handley of Charlottesville, VA, his daughter-in-law Elena Maria (Hidalgo) Handley, his grandchildren Laura Kathryn, Alex Elliott, James Michael, and Joseph Edward, and his granddaughter-in-law Jess Miers. He was preceded in death by his daughter Elizabeth (Beth) Freed Handley of Roanoke, VA.



A service of celebration for his life was held Friday, December 27, 2019, at 10AM at the chapel at The Village at Orchard Ridge, Winchester, VA. A committal was held later in the day at Grace Lutheran Church in Waynesboro.

### Another Biography:

## William A. Passavant

William Alfred Passavant (1821-1894) was the zealous home missionary who became the great 19th century pioneer in social services among American Lutherans. Born in Zelienople, Pennsylvania, Passavant was for decades involved in forming synods and establishing congregations.



But his heart went out to the poor and suffering of the communities in which he worked, largely in western Pennsylvania and the states immediately west of Pennsylvania. In 1846 his visit to deaconess institutions in Germany turned his ministerial zeal toward helping the poor, the suffering, the orphans and the whole range of concerns for the most needy people in American communities. With scarce resources (small gifts from Christians to whom he appealed), and with zeal and strong faith that "the Lord will provide," he established numerous hospitals and orphanages, starting with his home community at Zelienople and extending as far as Chicago and Milwaukee in the west and Mt. Vernon, New York in the east. He introduced deaconesses from Germany to work in these institutions. His publications, *The Missionary* and later *The Workman* were widely read and influential.

To sum it up, by his zeal, by his ability to inspire people, by his vision of Christian service to the needy ones, by his confidence in the Lord's guidance and support, Passavant became the pioneer leader and builder in the continuing-to-this-day strong tradition of Lutheran Social Services.

By Frederick Wentz



# 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 that the **Reverend Joel Otto** is the winner of the 2019 A.R. Wentz Prize in American Lutheran History for his paper “The Church Grows under the Cross: Wisconsin Synod Mission Expansion into the Sunshine States in the 1950s” in the award’s Ph.D./M.A. category.

Otto is a professor of church history and education as well as the Dean of Students at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon, Wisconsin. Otto expressed his appreciation and gratitude to the society for the award, which is offered each year for papers addressing Lutheranism in North America. One of the Wentz prize judges noted that “at a time when many mainline denominations have seen a decline in growth and memberships, Otto’s paper examines how the church in the past sought to grow and expand in new ways. His analysis offers today’s church some insight and inspiration.”



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)

Otto was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and is a graduate of Northwestern College in Watertown, Wisconsin (now Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota). He received his theological and pastoral training at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and served his vicarage at Sola Fide Lutheran Church in Lawrenceville, Georgia. In 1995 he was ordained subsequently has served as pastor to congregations in Midland, Michigan, Manitowoc and Minocqua, Wisconsin and in San Diego, California. Last year Trinity Evangelical Divinity School awarded him a Master of Theology degree in church history. Otto is married to Laura Herman Otto and they have been blessed with three children and one grandchild.

The society also announces a call for papers for the 2020 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, 717-334-5212, [info@lutheranhistoricalsociety.com](mailto:info@lutheranhistoricalsociety.com) or Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic, 61 Seminary Ridge, Gettysburg, PA 17325.

Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic  
61 Seminary Ridge  
Gettysburg, PA 17325  
[www.info@lutheranhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.info@lutheranhistoricalsociety.com)



# 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](mailto:info@lutheranhistoricalsociety.com)  
Web: [www.lutheranhistoricalsociety.com](http://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](http://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](mailto:info@lutheranhistoricalsociety.com)

**Subject: LHS Newsletter**



VOLUME 31, NUMBER 1

## *From the Region 8 Archives*

Among the diverse holdings of the ELCA Region 8 Archives at the A.R. Wentz Library, Gettysburg Campus, United Lutheran Seminary, are noncurrent records of Lutheran congregations, including historical records of disbanded congregations, from five Region 8 Synods, including Alleghany, Delaware-Maryland, Lower Susquehanna, Metropolitan Washington, DC, and Upper Susquehanna Synod. In this issue, we highlight the records of the following congregation:

### **CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH MONTGOMERY, PA**

(Upper Susquehanna Synod)

- Auditor's Report, 1943
- Council Minutes, 1933-2015
- Guest Book, 1974-2014
- Memorial Binder for Harold Jobias by Mary Jobias
- Parish View Newsletters, 1993-1997
- Record of Memorial Contributions, 2003-2009
- Charter Book
- Memorial Binder
- Newsletters, 1970-2008
- Parish Register, 2000-2014
- VHS Tapes

For more information, researchers should consult the guidelines to Research Inquiries for the Region 8 Archives Collections on the United Lutheran Seminary website at

<http://library.uls.edu/subjects/guide.php?subject=region8policies>.