

# NEWSLETTER

## Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic

### Annual Meeting Recap, October 22, 2020

For the first time, the Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic held its annual meeting virtually via Zoom on the evening of October 22, 2020, after plans for the spring meeting had to be cancelled in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. President Steve Herr called the annual meeting to order at 7:03 PM and welcomed the membership. After determining that a quorum for the meeting existed, a motion to accept the meeting agenda as submitted was made by Lee Knepp, seconded by Kevin Hepler, and approved. The minutes from the April 9, 2019 annual meeting were approved on motion of Mark Oldenburg, seconded by Andrew Frantz.

#### Officers' Reports:

- President Herr thanked the board of directors for their work and support during a challenging year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the resulting cancellation of programs. Membership remains steady and the society continues to work with United Lutheran Seminary on the prize funds. President Herr reported that Sheila Joy resigned her position as the society's archivist/historian to move to Philadelphia, where she accepted a new position on the United Lutheran Seminary campus as archivist of the Lutheran Archives Center.
- Secretary John Deeben noted there was no summer newsletter, due mainly from the cancellation of So-

ciety events because of the pandemic. There will be a fall newsletter and it should be distributed in November. The deadline to receive material is October 31.

- Treasurer Lee Knepp submitted a written report on the Society's finances from January 1 to September 20, 2020. The treasurer's report was approved on motion of Kevin Hepler, seconded by Paul Tomkiel.

#### Award Updates:

- President Herr reported that Joel Otto was the 2019 winner of the A.R. Wentz Prize, in the graduate student category. The 2020 prize has received the most submissions so far this year than ever before.
- Sean Titus reported there is so far only one nomination for the St. Paul/Biglerville Prize; the committee is hoping to receive more so the prize can be awarded next year. President Herr urged the membership to make recommendations to the committee.
- President Herr reported for the Historic Site Recognition Committee that an event was held on September 12 to recognize the Linwood House in Gettysburg, Pa., where the Gettysburg Seminary and Gettysburg College were both founded.

#### Old Business:

- There was an update on the Congre-

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#### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Annual meeting held via Zoom for the first time
- An historical year for the society in the time of COVID-19
- 2021 renewed memberships needed
- Resolutions of Thanks for James Mummert and Sheila Joy
- LHSMA members participate in Lutheran Historical Conference
- Archives for Ascension Lutheran Church, Willow Street, PA

## President's Corner - Winter 2020

This has been an unprecedented and challenging year throughout the world. I encourage the society's members to trust in the



faithfulness and promises of God whose abiding presence with us in the midst of this pandemic remains a source of peace, strength, and hope. Jesus, who is Emmanuel, God with us, brings tidings of comfort and joy at a time when the world is desperately in need. Our society's thoughts and prayers remain with all those affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

This year has seen historical moments for our society including its first ever virtual annual meeting. On October 22<sup>nd</sup>, the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the General Synod's founding, our society met by Zoom to conduct its annual meeting. I want to extend our society's appreciation to outgoing board members James Mummert and Sheila Joy for their service. Jim chaired the membership committee bringing enthusiasm and

passion to that work. Sheila served as our society's archivist and during her tenure helped update and organize the society's historical collection housed in the seminary archives at the Wentz Library in Gettysburg. Sheila and Jim—thank you for your service! In addition, we welcome new board members Karen Christian, Jon Diefenthaler, and Kristi Keller and thank them for their willingness to serve.

*Our society's mission continues to be the preservation, documentation and sharing of the history of Lutherans and Lutheranism in the Mid-Atlantic and adjoining areas.*

Our purpose as a society is to stimulate the interest in the history of Lutherans and Lutheranism, encourage the collection and preservation of archival materials; document Lutheran church life at the regional, synodical, and congregational levels, and assist scholarly research exploring Lutheran history. This year we continued this mission with the recognition of the Linwood House in Gettysburg as the society's eleventh officially recognized historic

site. While the event was limited in size due to the pandemic, it did provide an opportunity for former board member, Jane English who owns the Linwood House, to connect with her family and the society's board. All four of Jane's sons and members of their families attended the recognition. Congratulations to the English family and we thank them for their preservation of this important Lutheran site.

This year a robust number of papers were submitted for consideration of the A.R. Wentz Prize. The judges will be meeting later this month and the society is grateful to see increased interest in the prize.

Please visit our webpage [www.lutheranhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.lutheranhistoricalsociety.com) to renew your membership for 2021, make a secure donation to support the society's mission, and learn more about upcoming society events. May you and yours have a blessed and joyous Christmastide and a healthy, happy New Year.

Sincerely in Christ,

*Pastor Stephen R. Herr,  
President*

*Lutheran Historical Society  
of the Mid-Atlantic*

December 2, 2020



### LHSMA 2020 - 2021 Board of Directors

#### Board Members

Stephen Herr  
*President*  
Mark Oldenburg  
*Vice President*

John Deeben  
*Secretary*  
Lee Knepp  
*Treasurer*

Maria Erling  
*Archivist/Historian*  
Karen Christian  
Beth Clementson

Jon Diefenthaler  
David E. Flesner  
Andrew Frantz  
Kevin Hepler

Kristi Keller  
Louise Meledin  
Sean Titus  
Paul Tomkiel

#### Board Emeriti

Susan Hill  
Donald Housley  
Michael J. Kurtz

## Call for Archival Material

Hoping to turn the current pandemic situation into a teachable moment, United Lutheran Seminary is developing plans for an exhibit on its Gettysburg campus about congregational experiences with the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic and similar health crises. If your congregation lived through the 1918 pandemic and left a record (either archival documents or artifacts) showing how it coped, ULS would love to hear from you! Planners note that the exhibit will help current seminary students understand how congregations respond to such events.



*Celebrate Our Heritage*

If you would like to share information or loan documents or artifacts for the exhibit, please contact Rev. Dr. Maria Erling at [merling@uls.edu](mailto:merling@uls.edu).



## LHSMA Annual Meeting, Fall 2020, cont.

*(Continued from page 1)*

gational Heritage Workshop. President Herr thanked the committee that originally planned the event, and noted that it will be rescheduled, likely in the spring of 2022 after COVID ends. The hope is to maintain the current program schedule so presenters will need to be contacted regarding their availability.

### New Business:

- Vice President Mark Oldenburg reported for the Nominating Committee that the board is authorized to fill vacancies until the next annual meeting, and such vacancies occurred when the spring meeting was cancelled. The committee recommended Karen Christian to fill an unexpired 2-year term, and John Deeben, Andrew Frantz, Lee Knepp, Jon Diefenthaler, and Kristi Keller to fill open 3-year terms. The committee moved for the society membership to accept these board appointments and the motion was approved. President Herr also noted that board member John Fehringer passed away in February, and a memorial gift to the seminary was authorized by the board.

### Announcements for the Good of the Order:

- President Herr noted that the Lutheran Historical Conference will tentatively meet in Baltimore on September 30–October 2, 2021. A virtual conference was held this year following the cancellation of the live event.
- Herr also encouraged members to submit material to the Featured Lutheran page on the society's website.

The annual meeting adjourned at 7:25 PM on motion by Kevin Hepler, seconded by Sean Titus.

*By John Deeben*



# Lutherans Recognize Historic Site

By Michael Cooper-White for the Gettysburg Times

One of American Lutheranism's most historic sites was honored Saturday September 12, 2020, by the Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic.

The "Linwood House" at Washington and High streets in Gettysburg was built in 1810 with a \$2,000 grant from the Pennsylvania legislature to house the Adams County Academy founded by Thaddeus Stevens and other prominent citizens.

After the Academy fizzled and the building came up for sale, the imposing mansion became the birthplace of both the Lutheran Theological Seminary and Gettysburg College, originally known as Pennsylvania College.

The institutions founded by famous Lutheran minister Samuel Simon Schmucker are the oldest Lutheran-affiliated seminary and college in the Americas.

In 1826, the 27-year-old Schmucker founded the seminary on behalf of the Lutheran church's General Synod and became its first professor. Six years later, the fledgling school for ministers relocated to its current site atop Seminary Ridge and the college was chartered as successor to the preparatory Gettysburg Gymnasium.

After the college moved to its present site, Linwood housed the Gettysburg Female Seminary "for the education of female youth" until 1870.

During the Civil War battle, the structure was hit by an artillery shell that is still lodged in its northern wall. Like churches and buildings at the seminary and college, it was used as a hospital for wounded soldiers.

Converted to a private home, the property gradually fell into disrepair. When Carl Reuning bought it

in 1932, his wife Isabel expressed her dismay that he spent \$5,000 for "that old place."

Lovingly restored initially by the Reunings, and then their daughter Jane and her husband David Eng-



Jane English accepts a plaque from Rev. Stephen Herr, president of the Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic

lish, the home today is among Gettysburg's most pristine properties.

The Englishes raised four sons in the home, all of whom were present for the ceremony on Saturday during which Jane English received a commemorative plaque from Lutheran Historical Society's president, Rev. Stephen Herr.

Throughout their ownership of the historic property, the English family has frequently welcomed guests from both the college and seminary.

The entire seminary community held a lawn party at Linwood during 175th anniversary celebrations in 2001. When Gettysburg joined with its Philadelphia counterpart to form United Lutheran Seminary in 2017, the last regularly scheduled class as Gettysburg Seminary was held in the Linwood living room.

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## Lutheran Historic Site (cont.)

(Continued from page 4)

### Society Honors Another Schmucker Legacy

The current historical society was formed in 1989 after the national merger of three Lutheran bodies created the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Its predecessor historic preservation societies date back to 1843 when the Historical Society of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States of North America was founded by none other than Schmucker.

Through its Historical Site Recognition Program, the Society honors locales of distinction in American Lutheran history.

The ten sites previously bestowed commemorative plaques include historic east coast congregations such as Luther Place in Washington, D.C., Christ Lutheran in York, and Holy Trinity in Lancaster. The chapel at the University of Maryland was recognized as the site of the 1970 ordination for Gettysburg Seminary graduate Elizabeth Platz, the first American female Lutheran pastor.

In its tribute Saturday, the Society declared it was “delighted to recognize, honor, and commemorate this place.”

As he presented the plaque, Herr, who is Jane English’s pastor at Christ Lutheran Church of Gettysburg, noted that she had previously served on its board.

Herr thanked Jane and her late husband David for their dedication and careful stewardship of the historic property, described in a commemorative brochure as “the cradle of higher learning in Adams County and for the Lutheran church in America.”

### New Seminary President Speaks

On hand also for the commemorative ceremony, which would have been a much larger gathering were it not for COVID-19 crowd limitations, was United Lutheran Seminary’s new president, Rev. Dr. Guy



*Rev. Dr. Guy Erwin, United Lutheran Seminary president, talks to members of the English family during the ceremony*

Erwin.

A noted Lutheran church historian himself, Erwin came to head the two-campus school last month after serving the past seven years as bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America’s Southwest California Synod.

In his remarks, Erwin expressed gratitude for this wonderful legacy of Lutheran education.” Careful preservation of the historic site, he said, “is a gift to the seminary, the college, the Lutheran church, this community and the nation.”

Erwin noted Schmucker and others were engaged in a risky venture as they founded the seminary and college. Drawing parallels to our own era, he described the early 19th century as a time of “political, economic and social challenges in which the nation was in a tumultuous era.”

# LHSMA Board Happenings

By John Deeben

The Board of Directors of the Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic met virtually on August 25, 2020, via Zoom, in response to social distancing measures necessitated by the historic COVID-19 pandemic emergency.

President Steve Herr called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM and welcomed the new members. All of the members introduced themselves. Maria Erling led opening prayer. Vice President Mark Oldenburg served as acting secretary.

The minutes from the June 2, 2020 meeting had been distributed. A motion to accept the minutes as amended was made by Lee Knepp, seconded by Kevin Hepler, and approved.

A motion to accept the meeting agenda as proposed was made by Mark Oldenburg, seconded by Kevin Hepler, and was approved.

## Officers' Reports:

President Steve Herr reported that the officers had recommended scheduling the annual meeting by Zoom at 7 PM on October 22. While there might be a short program, this meeting would focus on required business (approval of elections and Treasurer's report, for instance).

The recognition of the Linwood House as a historical site has been set for late morning, September 12. Because of the pandemic, it will be a small ceremony, to which the board members, however, will be invited, as well as the English family and the presidents of United Lutheran Seminary and Gettysburg College.

President Herr also reported that Secretary John Deeben has sent the thanks of the board to its former members.

There was no summer newsletter, but there will be a fall newsletter, with October 31 as the deadline for submissions.

## Treasurer's Report:

Lee Knepp had distributed his report. On a motion by Kevin Hepler, seconded by Paul Tomkiel, it was approved. Lee further reported that he worked with the webmaster to update online membership, donations, and registrations to include as an extra the

processing fees.

## Committee Reports:

Each committee described its function and continuing efforts.

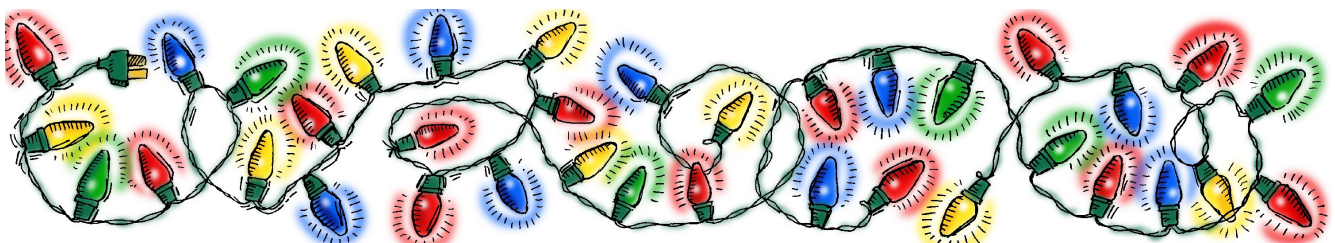
Regarding the A.R. Wentz Prize, the board, by consensus, reaffirmed its decision not to award a prize this year, but to allow those eligible this year to submit papers for a prize. Deadline will be August 31, 2021.

## Old Business:

Jon Diefenthaler and Maria Erling reported on the state of affairs with the upcoming Lutheran Historical Conference. More than 20 papers had been submitted for the conference. Several of the authors will be presenting their papers virtually on October 1. The rest will be presented in a re-scheduled conference in September 30–October 2, 2021 in Baltimore and Gettysburg.

There was no New Business to report.

Next board meeting (via Zoom) is scheduled for October 22, 2020, immediately following the close of the annual meeting. The board meeting adjourned at 5:58 PM on motion by Maria Erling, seconded by Kristi Keller.



## *Resolutions of Thanks*

At its Spring board meeting on June 2, 2020, the board of directors of the Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic unanimously passed the following resolutions to recognize the service and contributions of former board members James Mummert and Sheila Joy:

*On behalf of the Society, the Board offers its sincere thanks to James Mummert for his service on the board. Along with his sterling general service as a board member, he has been a diligent and imaginative leader of the Membership Committee, bringing both order and prosperity to that work. His service in staffing the Society's display at the assemblies of the Lower Susquehanna Synod has been both engaging and fruitful. We delight in and anticipate his continuing dedication to the Society.*

*On behalf of the Society, the Board offers its sincere thanks to Sheila Joy for her service on the board. Along with her sterling general service as a board member and a leader in the Program Committee, the Society benefited greatly from her work as its Archivist. We congratulate her on her new position with the Lutheran Archives Center in Philadelphia, and look forward to her work in our shared field of preserving and publicizing the history of Lutherans*



James retired from the board following the expiration of his term this year, and Sheila resigned in March to accept her new position in Philadelphia. Congratulations James and Sheila on your well-deserved honor!

### **Featured Lutheran:**

## *Frederick Augustus Conrad Muhlenberg*

Frederick Augustus Conrad Muhlenberg was born January 1, 1750 in Trappe, Montgomery County,



Pennsylvania, son of the noted Lutheran theologian Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg. Like his father, Frederick received his theological training at the University of Halle in Germany and was later ordained as a Lutheran minister by the Ministerium of

Pennsylvania on October 20, 1770. He served parishes in Pennsylvania and New York City from 1770 to

August 1779, when he then became a member of the Second Continental Congress.

From 1780 to 1783 Muhlenberg served as speaker in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. He attended the Pennsylvania state convention to ratify the U.S. Constitution in 1787, where he served as president, and then won election to Congress as the first Speaker of the House of Representatives from 1789–91. As Speaker, he was the first to sign the Bill of Rights. After serving four consecutive terms in Congress, including a second term as Speaker from 1793–95, Muhlenberg retired from national politics in 1797. He served in Pennsylvania as president of the council of censors and receiver general of the state land office until his death at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, on June 4, 1801.

## Featured Lutheran:

# *Stewart W. Herman, Jr.*

Stewart Winfield Herman, Jr., Lutheran pastor, Foreign Service worker, OSS Operative, first Lutheran World Federation Director of Refugee Services, and seminary president. Stewart W. Herman Jr. was born in 1909 in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. A graduate of Gettysburg College and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Herman pursued graduate work in Europe in 1934. While there he was called to serve as the pastor of the American Church in Berlin. When World War II broke out in 1939, Herman began his service with the United States Foreign Service serving as an official visitor to Canadian, British and French P.O.W. camps.



Interned at Bad Nauheim with the U.S. Embassy staff, he returned home to write and share his experiences in the Nazi capital. Recruited by William Donovan, Herman served with the Office of Strategic

Services from 1943-1945. He re-entered Germany soon after VE day as a member of the World Council of Churches Department of Reconstruction and Intra-Church Aid. In this capacity he would work to rebuild the German churches. When the Lutheran World Federation was formed in 1947, Herman became its first director of Refugee Services from 1948-1952. He returned to the United States that year to lead the LWF Committee on South America. From 1964-1971 he served as the first president of the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago. Responding to Martin Luther King, Jr.'s invitation to clergy, Herman travelled to Selma, Alabama in 1965.

He retired in 1971 living on Shelter Island, New York with his wife Ethelyn. He died in 2006 leaving a legacy of Lutheran, ecumenical and international service.

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## *The Lutheran Historical Conference*

Members of LHSMA also participate in the Lutheran Historical Conference. The Lutheran Historical Conference fosters effective cooperation among persons and institutions concerned with research, documentation and preservation of the resources revealing experiences of Lutheranism in North America, specifically:

- \* to coordinate the archival, microfilm and historical activities of the Lutheran church bodies in North America;
- \* to foster the utilization of modern technologies in the accomplishment of germane tasks;
- \* to stimulate future efforts and to seek to avoid duplication of effort;
- \* to provide a channel for communication and cooperation among Lutheran archivists, librarians and historians;
- \* to encourage research and production of scholarly works dealing with the history of Lutheranism in North America.

To learn more about The Lutheran Historical Conference including their biennial meeting now scheduled for Fall 2021 in Baltimore visit their website [www.luthhistcon.org](http://www.luthhistcon.org)





# **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**

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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 2

## *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:

### **ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**WILLOW STREET, PA**

(Lower Susquehanna Synod)

- Alpha Sigma Minutes
- Ascension Brotherhood
- Common Service Book 1917
- Confirmation Class Photograph, 1995
- Congregational Meetings, 1946–1950
- Constitution and Bylaws, 1963
- Correspondence, 1967–1973
- Council Minutes, 1930–1943, 1946–1952
- Fiftieth Anniversary Materials, 1960
- Guest Books, 1951–1987
- History of Congregation
- Homecoming Services, 1960, 1985, 1986
- Legal Documents
- Luther League Records
- Mortgage Burning, 1973
- Parsonage Dedication, 1950
- Photographs, Service Bulletins
- Stewardship Materials
- Sunday School Records, Vacation Church School Records
- Women's Group Records
- Women's Missionary Society Treasurer's Books, 1935–1957

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>.