

NEWSLETTER

Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic 2023 Annual Meeting and Program Saturday, September 9 at 9:00 a.m. A.R. Wentz Library, United Lutheran Seminary, Gettysburg

9:00 a.m.	Gather, Welcome, Devotions
9:30 a.m.	Keynote Address
10:45 a.m.	Break
11:00 a.m.	Panel Discussion
11:45 a.m.	Annual Meeting
12:00 noon	Lunch

The program is FREE and there is a \$10 cost for lunch. No lunch cost for high school, college, and seminary students. Registration is required. To register, complete the registration form (see second page of this document) or register online at www.LutheranHistoricalSociety.com



Keynote Presenter: The Rev. Matthew Borrasso *The Art of Exegesis: An Analysis of the Life and Work of Martin Hans Franzmann*

Matthew E. Borrasso lives with his wife and children in the Lexington Park area of Maryland where he serves as pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church. He earned a B.A. in Theology from Concordia University—Chicago (2008), an M.A. in Christian Ministry from Northern Seminary (2012), an M.Div. from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (2014), and an S.T.M. from United Lutheran Seminary (2018). He is currently a Ph.D. student at the University of Birmingham (UK) researching the practical effects of Lutheran hermeneutics in the LCMS and ELCA regarding issues of human sexuality. His presentation focuses on his St. Paul, Biglerville Prize-winning book.

Panel Discussion: Church Record Keeping through Transitions: What should we keep?

The panel will help congregations retain the records from experiences like the pandemic, as well as introduce best practices for digital record keeping.

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- *Rev. Stephen Herr declared President Emeritus*
- *Annual Meeting registration due September 1*
- *Pastoral care records must be held in strictest confidence*
- *Circuit riders covered Pennsylvania through most of 18th century*
- *Members encouraged to consider a Life Membership to LHSMA*

President's Corner - Summer 2023

Last issue, I paid tribute to The Rev. Stephen Herr, and it pleases me to announce that the Board of our Society has declared



him President Emeritus of the Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic.

I should also report that the A.R. Wentz Prize competition has been launched with the deadline for papers being September 30. Please spread the word to potential competitors in all four categories.

Planning is nearly complete for the Annual Meeting & Program to be held 9 September 2023 in the A.R. Wentz Library on the Gettysburg Campus of United Lutheran Seminary. That's coming up fast. Get your registration in. Bring a friend. Some think of history as a solitary activity. Nothing

could be further from the truth. Historical facts are mined, but it is in the coining of the facts through critical analysis and their exchange in conversation that produces a wealth of understanding.

It is probably time that I introduced myself. I am from Berks County, PA, baptized in the German Reformed half of a one-time union church. My ancestors were Lutheran, but (as was not uncommon) my grandfather married a Reformed girl. My father married a Lutheran, and after moving off the farm we ended up in the Lutheran congregation in which I was confirmed. Gettysburg College '87, majoring in History, and,

yes, I had Dr. Glatfelter for Historical Methods and Senior Seminar (along with our secretary and my classmate, John Deeben). I served as a seasonal park ranger (historical interpreter) at Hopewell Furnace NHS, Valley Forge NHP, and Ei-

senhower NHS throughout college and for a time after. Gettysburg Seminary '94 and then again in '11. I served a two-point parish in the Potomac Highlands for six years and then the Lutheran Campus Ministry at West Virginia University for fifteen. I now serve as bishop of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod, ELCA. In the fall of 1987, I sat in the basement of Musselman Library, Gettysburg College, and read every presidential address to the American Historical Association that had been delivered and published to that time; I have some catching up to do.

By all means, feel free to drop me a line. I can be reached by email at bishop@wv-wmd.org.

The Rt. Rev.
Matthew Lynn Riegel,
S.T.M., President
Lutheran Historical
Society of the Mid-Atlantic
West Virginia Western Maryland
Synod, ELCA
304-363-4030
<http://WV-WMD.org>

Rev. Stephen Herr
declared President
Emeritus of the
Lutheran Historical
Society of the Mid-
Atlantic

(Continued from page 1)



The Rev. Dr. Maria Erling,
Professor of Modern Church History and
Global Mission, United Lutheran
Seminary

Victoria Jesswein,
Assistant Archivist,
United Lutheran Seminary Library



LHSMA 2022 - 2023 Board of Directors

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Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic

2023 Annual Meeting and Program Saturday, September 9 at 9:00 a.m.

A.R. Wentz Library United Lutheran Seminary, Gettysburg

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

I plan to attend the September 9 LHSMA program and annual meeting: _____

Boxed lunches will be catered by The Ragged Edge. The lunch will include a sandwich, chips, cookies, and bottled drink.

I would like a lunch _____

Please select one of the wraps below

Tuna salad, spring mix, tomatoes _____

Chicken salad, spring mix, tomatoes _____

Ham, cheddar, spring mix, tomatoes _____

Turkey, swiss, spring mix, tomatoes _____

Hummus, tomatoes, carrots, spinach, roasted red peppers _____

If you need arrangements for a nut-free, gluten-free or vegan option check please check here. _____

Please complete this form and return by September 1 to:

Lee Knepp
P.O. Box 76
McClure, PA 17801

Managing Church Records, Part V: Pastoral Care Files

By John Deeben

The following information on how to manage church records is based on guidelines developed by the ELCA's Office of the Secretary. More information is available on the ELCA website at www.elca.org.

Church Archives



When the pastor, or other authorized staff member, provides pastoral care to parishioners, such as marriage counseling or personal spiritual direction, the pastor may create a file containing: date and time of consultation; persons present; observation notes; tests, such as personality inventories; and correspondence.

The pastor, or other authorized staff member, must use good judgment in establishing the nature of each relationship and in creating documentation of it. The principle of confessional confidences, which applies to all ordained ministers of this church, is specified by ELCA churchwide constitutional provision (7.45): "In keeping with the historic discipline and practice of the Lutheran Church and to be true to a sacred trust inherent in the nature of the pastoral office, no ordained minister of this church shall divulge any confidential disclosure received in the course of the care of souls or otherwise in a professional capacity, nor testify concerning conduct observed by the ordained minister

while working in a pastoral capacity, except with the express permission of the person who has given confidential information to the ordained minister or who was observed by the ordained minister, or if the person intends great harm to self or others" (churchwide constitutional provision 7.45. in the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America).

Pastoral care files must be kept locked and in strictest confidence as they involve a relationship at the highest level of trust and are usually subject to the clergy and penitent privilege. The parishioner should sign a release if any information is to leave the file at any time. In all states, suspected cases of child abuse are required to be reported to the authorities. Whether such reporting requirements apply to pastors may vary. Consult an attorney in your state for guidance on such matters.

An understanding of the nature of a particular pastoral care relationship will determine the appropriate disposition of its records.

© *Records Retention Schedule for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*. Edition current as of November 19, 2012. Office of the Secretary, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. These guidelines may be copied for use in the congregation provided copyright is acknowledged.



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



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

Circuit-Riding in the Susquehanna Valley: A Brief Overview

By John Deeben

The previous newsletter featured a biographical sketch of the Rev. John Peter Shindel (1787–1853), perhaps one of the most prolific Lutheran circuit riders of the nineteenth century. It is important to note, however, that Shindel represented just the apex of a long tradition of circuit-riding activity in the Susquehanna Valley region of central Pennsylvania that today includes Northumberland, Snyder, and Union counties.

The emergence of early Lutheran congregations depended to a very large extent, of course, upon the presence of practicing ministers. Due to the sparsely-populated, wilderness nature of most early American settlements along the eastern seaboard and Allegheny-Appalachian Mountain ranges, clergymen found it absolutely necessary to perform their duties in missionary fashion. They traversed the land on horseback to reach and tend their isolated pockets of followers. Unlike the present-day custom of holding worship services every Sunday, ministers usually preached to their congregations on a rotating basis, visiting each parish in turn until they completed their “circuit.” After that, they would begin the rotation again. In this fashion, most country parishes on average observed public worship every two weeks, and in some cases only once a month. Sometimes, geological limitations (such as mountains and rivers), and the primitive conditions of nineteenth-century travel (where many principal highways were often nothing more than narrow dirt tracts or farm lanes), also forced many congregations of a common parish or region to be supplied by different ministers. Where no formal churches existed, many traveling preachers often held worship services in private homes or local public houses.

Circuit riding was truly an interdenominational occupation, and it was demonstrated nowhere more readily than in central Pennsylvania in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As early as 1742 Moravian missionaries led by Count von Zinzendorf and Conrad Weiser, who was Pennsylvania’s colonial Indian agent, made frequent visits to the Indian settlements around the forks of the Susquehanna River at Shamokin (present-day Sunbury.) In 1775 Philip V. Fithian, a licentiate of the First Presbytery of Philadelphia, visited the colonial settlements of the Susquehanna River basin, conducting worship services along

the way. German Reformed circuit activity followed soon after. Records from the Reformed coetus (the local governing ministerium which covered Sunbury) from May 1776 indicated at that time that “several congregations at Shamokin [Sunbury] asked to be alternately visited by ministers,” a call to which the coetus membership resolved: “ministers shall visit them several times in the year to preach for them and to perform other ministerial acts.”



Reformed ministers who subsequently preached in the region included William Hendel, who remained until 1782; Samuel Dubendorff, who supplied from 1778-90; Cyriacus Spangenberg (1783-86); Jonathan Rahauer (1789-92); and George Geistweit (1794-1804). In the nineteenth century, Rev. Rudolph Duenger (this writer’s third-great-grandfather) served the Lower Mahanoy Charge in Northumberland County beginning in 1836, circulating among congregations located at Red Cross (St. Peter’s), Rebuck (Himmel’s), Leck Kill (St. John’s) Upper Mahanoy Township (St. Jacob’s or Howerter’s) and Hebe (St. David’s), as well as Hegins (Frieden’s) in neighboring Schuylkill County.

Methodist Episcopal circuit riders appeared about the same time. The first regular appointment for the Methodist Church in north-central Pennsylvania was the Northumberland Circuit in 1791. The circuit covered the area from the Town of Northumberland along the North Branch of the Susquehanna River through Danville and Catawissa to the Wyoming Valley. Along the West Branch it followed the river to Lock Haven and included Penn’s Valley near Centre Hall, then traveling back towards Northumberland along Penn’s Creek. The distance covered was almost 300 miles, and required about six weeks for the presiding minister to travel. Rev. William Colbert of Maryland was the first pastor appointed to the Northumberland Circuit in May 1792. Twenty years later, in 1812, the Methodist Episcopal Church established a more southern-ranging circuit from the Susquehanna to Broad Mountain between Mahantongo and Nescopeck Creeks, called the Shamokin Circuit.

Lutheran missionaries exhibited perhaps the most prolific activity during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and in many instances mirrored that of the Ger-

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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**

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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.

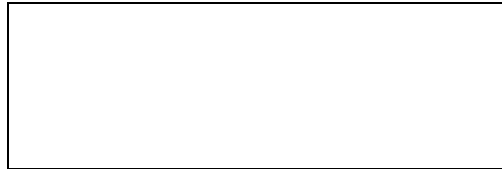
Address corrections are helpful.

Send replies via email to:

Matthew Riegel

info@lutheranhistoricalsociety.com

Subject: LHS Newsletter



VOLUME 34, 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:

ST. MATTHEW'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

McCLURE, SNYDER CO., PA

(Upper Susquehanna Synod)

- Communion Record 1931-1944
- Congregational Records 1876-1929
- Council Meeting Minutes
 - 1929-1938
 - 1939-1943
- Financial Records
 - 1910-1943
 - 1934-1958
- Ladies Aid Society Records
 - 1915-1935
 - 1930-1971 (Financial Accounts)
 - 1934-1942
 - 1943-1953
- Loyal Daughters Bible Class Records 1935-1944
- Secretary's Record Book 1926-1942
- Sunday School Board Minutes
 - 1928-1942
 - 1943-1953
- Treasurer's Records 1895-1944
- Young Women's Bible Class Record Book 1926-1932

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>.