



LUTHERAN HISTORICAL CONFERENCE

# NEWSLETTER

## TIME TO START PLANNING FOR 2019

By Mark Granquist, LHC President

Well, 2017 was quite a ride, wasn't it? For anyone connected with Martin Luther and the Lutheran tradition, this was the kind of year that come around, well, once every 500 years. It seems that old Martin Luther was celebrated virtually everywhere, way beyond our tribe. Of course Lutherans everywhere celebrated in the weeks and months leading up to October 31, 1517 (without bothering to wonder if the theses were posted, and whether it really happened that date). Publishers had a field day. All sorts of secular types stopped to notice that there was a fellow named Martin Luther, and that he was distinct from Rev. Dr. King, Jr. It was mildly amusing to see how far some folks tried to stretch Luther as a hero or pioneer of anything or everything in Western culture, as long as it wasn't theological (can't have that, now, can we?)



Will there be as much in the way of celebration for, say the Heidelberg Disputation, or the Marburg Colloquy, or other such subsequent 500th anniversaries? Don't hold your breath. But perhaps there should be some observances among us in 2019, and for reasons beyond Martin Luther and the Reformation, for 2019 will mark the 400th anniversary of the presence of Lutherans in North America.

Yes, 1619 was the first verifiable presence of Lutherans in the New World, namely a party of Danish explorers seeking the fabled "Northwest Passage" to Asia. There are sketchy references earlier to "Lutheranos" in Spanish America, but in all likelihood these were misidentifications, based on the fact that the Spanish couldn't tell one kind of Protestant from another (the ones in question were actually French Huguenots). These poor, wandering Danes, including a Lutheran pastor, Rasmus Jensen, were frozen into Hudson's Bay, Canada during the winter of 1619-20, and almost all of them (including the pastor) died over the winter. Not a terribly auspicious start. But by a century later there were thriving Lutheran populations in the British colonies in North America, and even some scattered settlements in the Caribbean. Their presence, too, should be noted and celebrated, for many reasons not necessarily all about 1619.

There will be North American Lutheran celebrations of 400 years in 2019; the Lutheran Historical Conference, the Concordia Historical Institute, the WELS Historical Society, and others will be putting on events. But these celebrations are hardly enough. It would be wonderful to have pastors and congregations start thinking about celebrating not only the history of Lutherans in North America, but also their own histories, and where they fit into this story.

So, you have all of 2018 to rest up from the 2017 festivities, but don't forget to start thinking and planning for 2019!

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## 2018 GATHERING WILL BE IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

The next biennial meeting of the Lutheran Historical Conference will be October 4-6, 2018, on the campus of California Lutheran University in Thousand Oaks, Calif. The CLU campus is located north of downtown Los Angeles, in a beautiful area of Southern California. We are

excited to be holding our first meeting ever in this region. More details will follow, but be sure to "save the dates" on your calendar.

### Call for Papers

As of this date we have not yet de-

cidated on the theme for the next Biennial meeting, but the Call for Papers should be available early in 2018. Watch our new website, [www.histhistcon.org](http://www.histhistcon.org), for the most up-to-date information.

## BIGLERVILLE PRIZE WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic announced that Tim Townsend and Mark Granquist have won the St. Paul, Biglerville Prize in American Lutheran History. Townsend's *Mission at Nuremberg: An American Army Chaplain and the Trial of the Nazis* (HarperCollins Publishers, 2014) explores the ministry of Lutheran pastor Henry Gercke with twenty-one Nazi leaders awaiting trial. "In placing Lutheran chaplaincy and ideas of pastoral care at the heart of his account of one of the most famous trials in world history, Townsend's account is a powerful story of American Luther-

anism on the world stage" commented Dr. Jill Oglie Titus, chair of the society's Biglerville Prize committee.

Titus noted that "Mark Granquist's *Lutherans in America: A New History* (Fortress Press, 2015) offers a thoughtful reinterpretation of American Lutheran history, raising timely questions about unity, diversity, and the definition of a missional church history. We are delighted to recognize these two excellent works, both of which - in their own distinctive ways - profoundly enhance our understanding of American Lutheran history."

These monographs are the tenth and eleventh books to receive the award in the 23-year history of the Biglerville prize. The prize is awarded every two to three years by the Society to a newly published book of mature scholarship in American Lutheran history. It was established by St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Biglerville, Pa., to honor their pastor, the Reverend Frederick Weiser, at the time of his retirement. It includes a \$3000 award and was last awarded in 2014.

## RENOVATIONS PROCEED ON SALEM LANDMARK



Recent renovation work at Salem Landmark Church, Milwaukee, Wis., included interior work, as well as work on the belfry. On the grounds of Salem, in a log church, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod was founded on May 26, 1850. The current Landmark Church,



constructed in 1863, is being renovated to restore it to its original 1863 appearance. Funding is coming from donations given to the WELS Historical Institute. More information can be found at <http://www.welshistory.org>.

**Don't forget to check out the new LHC website at [www.luthhistcon.org](http://www.luthhistcon.org)**

# LUTHERAN HISTORICAL CONFERENCE MINI-GRANTS

We are pleased to announce the resumption of LHC mini-grants to support projects and activities that promote the study, documentation, and preservation of the history and record of Lutheranism in North America. Mini-grants will be awarded on an annual basis for up to \$1,000. Preference may be given to those who have not previously received a mini-grant award and only members of the LHC are eligible to apply. The grant process is competitive and the LHC board will determine the number of awards each year based upon the quality of the applications.

Completed applications must include a cover page (below); a project description (one page); a statement of significance and likely impact of project relative to Lutheran identity (one page); and a detailed budget. All application materials should be submitted electronically to grants@luthhist.org. Applications are due by 16 February 2018 and will not be considered beyond that date. All applicants will receive notification of award decisions by 2 April 2018.

Those receiving mini-grants are expected to submit a formal written report summarizing progress and outcome of project one year after the award is granted. Any funds not used within two years of award shall be returned to the LHC.

## Lutheran Historical Conference Mini-Grant Program Application Materials – Cover Sheet

Name of Applicant/Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Federal Identification Number (FEIN) \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member of the LHC?

Have you previously received a LHC mini-grant?

## KEEP CURRENT ON YOUR MEMBERSHIP

We have a number of exciting things coming up in the LHC in the next year or so:

- Our Biennial meeting will be October 4-6, 2018, at California Lutheran
- New issues of our annual Journal will be appearing

- Other events will be planned for 2019, the 400th Anniversary of Lutherans in North America

Your past support of the Lutheran Historical Conference, and your future participation in our work is greatly appreciated.

It is easy to let your membership to the LHC fall into arrears – the concerns of the day and other considerations may well push this from your mind. We do however need all of you as continuing members of the LHC, and we need you, and your membership contributions, to keep the work of the LHC moving forward. Thanks!

## LHC PERIODICALS NOW ON ATLA DATABASE

You can now access the periodicals of the LHC (the current Journal and the past Essays & Reports) on the database package of the American Theological Library Association (ATLA) database, the standard database for religious and theological periodicals. Many academic libraries have the AT-

LA database as a part of their online collections. The advantage to the LHC about this is that we receive royalties for every “hit” on our periodicals in the collection. Last year, in the first full year of our affiliation with ATLA, we had 438 hits which brought us a check recently for \$63.36. Now, this is not a

huge amount of money, but 438 viewings of our periodical means that people are using our publications, and that is part of our mission. Everytime you, or your students access the LHC publications online, we get paid!



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## BOOK REVIEWS

Those interested in contributing book reviews or wishing to suggest a book, please contact David Settje at [David.Settje@CUChicago.edu](mailto:David.Settje@CUChicago.edu).

Each review should be between 500 and 750 words long, be sent as a MS Word document or in a compatible format, and specifically evaluate the book and its Lutheran content/context.

## NEEDED: YOUR NEWS!

This newsletter is intended as a clearinghouse of information for archivists, historians and librarians. It needs **you** to provide material for it.

Please send material for publication to the editor. Items of interest include notice of research in progress, new appointments, publications, meetings and celebrations planned or held, bibliographical materials, and anything of general interest to LHC members.

The LHC Newsletter is issued three times a year: Winter, Summer, and Fall.

Please send items to  
[Joel.Thoreson@elca.org](mailto:Joel.Thoreson@elca.org).

## Have You Renewed Your Membership?

If the mailing label on your newsletter shows an expiration date (Exp:) of "16" or less, please renew now for 2017. Send a check for \$35.00, payable to the "Lutheran Historical Conference" to **Martin Lohrmann, Treasurer, 333 Wartburg Place, Dubuque, IA 52003**.