

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 35, NUMBER 1

SPRING 2024

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A Recap of Schmucker at 225:

Revisiting What He Thought and What He Wrought

By John Deeben and Stephen Herr

February 28, 2024 marked the 225th anniversary of Samuel Simon Schmucker's birth. Born in 1799 Schmucker shaped Lutheranism in America throughout the nineteenth century until his death in 1873. He was a prevailing voice among Lutherans in the Mid-Atlantic region serving as President and Professor at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Gettysburg. His work establishing the General Synod and fostering Lutheran and ecumenical cooperation contributed significantly to the growth of Lutheranism. Furthermore, Schmucker founded Gettysburg Seminary in 1826, Gettysburg College in 1832, Christ Lutheran Church in Gettysburg in 1835-36, and the Lutheran Historical Society (forerunner of the Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid Atlantic) in 1843.

Anniversary Celebration

On February 24 over eighty persons gathered in Mara Auditorium on the campus of Gettysburg College to mark the 225th anniversary of his birth and explore his life and impact. The event had its origins a year earlier in conversations between Gettysburg College History Professor Michael Birkner and Pastor Stephen Herr. The pair was soon joined by LHSMA President Matthew Riegel and plans were set in motion for a conference that would revisit Schmucker and his impact.

LHSMA became the lead sponsor and was joined by Christ Lutheran Church in

Gettysburg and three departments at Gettysburg College including the Civil War Institute, the Provost's Office, and the History Department. The conference drew an amazing attendance of over eighty people, from historical scholars and ordained clergy, to lay leaders with an abiding interest in Lutheran history along with Gettysburg College and United Lutheran Seminary students and faculty.

The Rev. Dr. Maria Erling opened the conference with a presentation entitled "Schmucker's Long Shadow" providing an excellent overview exploring Schmucker's legacy and influence. Erling's presentation set the stage for the day as following papers explored specific elements of Schmucker's life and work. A panel moderated by the Rev. Dr. Guy Erwin, President of United Lutheran Seminary (ULS) followed Erling's lecture. Dr. Susan McArver, the H. George Anderson Professor of Church History at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, presented on the relationship of Schmucker and Gettysburg Seminary's second professor Ernest Lewis Hazelius. Hazelius would leave Gettysburg and conclude his career at the Southern Seminary. The Rev. Dr. Mark Oldenburg, ULS Steck-Miller Professor Emeritus of the Art of Worship, offered reflections on "Some Surprising Aspects of Schmucker's Opposition to Slavery." Oldenburg included an analysis of

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- LHSMA Lead sponsor for Schmucker at 225
- More than eighty attended Schmucker event
- Program plans in process for October Joint LHSMA/LHC meeting
- Members encouraged to consider Life Membership to LHSMA
- Gilbrecht served as schoolmaster, pastor, and artist
- Pennypacker served as governor of PA and president of Historical Society of PA

President's Corner - Spring 2024

I wish I could say that it is time to take a breather, but "Schmucker at 225" is not really behind us. There are still



back-office things to do and the not so insignificant task of publishing the papers. Still, it was a great event, and thanks to not only all those who made it happen but also to all of you who attended. I'll not go into the details as President Emeritus Herr has an article in this issue of the newsletter. Still, I want to highlight something: attendance.

A few weeks out from the event, Herr, Michael Birkner, and I were looking at registration and hoping to see thirty. Catch that? "Hoping." Instead, roughly eighty showed up, and, from all appearances (and not a few comments), they enjoyed the day. How is it that even we historians, whether by vocation or avocation, can be such pessimists about the appeal of our own discipline? Have we been duped? Look! Eighty people spent a day listening to lectures about some guy who died 150 years ago!

There is more interest in history than even we imagine, and why shouldn't there be?

"Die Geschichte ist das γινῶσι σαυτὸν der Menschheit, ihr Gewissen." — Droysen, *Grundriss der Historik* (1868)

As Turner rendered it in "The Significance of History" (1891), "History is the 'know thyself of humanity' — the self-consciousness of mankind."

We engage in the historical enterprise for our own edification and enjoyment.

We probe the past that we would better know humanity in this time and withal might better plot the course for the time ahead. But that is not the end of it. Fellow historians, let us invite others into our work. I am not speaking here of inviting others to join our Society though there is certainly no harm in that—indeed, invite others to join our Society! I am talking about encouraging others to know themselves by knowing their history.

Our Society can be part of that *know thyself*. Whether by membership, events, or publications, our Society can benefit the knowing of self (whether that *self* is humanity writ large, small, or anything in between). We members of the Society should never be shy about telling others what the Society offers in education, research support, publication, and fellowship. Part of the success of "Schmucker at 225" is attributable to getting the word out. Well done! So, spread the

"History is the 'know thyself of humanity' — the self-consciousness of mankind."

word, especially when the Society has an event. If our neighbor finds it to be nothing more than a pleasant diversion, that will suffice, but we know it is much more than that.

The Rt. Rev.

*Matthew Lynn Riegel,
S.T.M., President*

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Save the Date:**LHSMA–Lutheran Historical Conference Joint Meeting
October 12, 2024**

Make plans to join us on Saturday, October 12, 2024, as The Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic hosts the Lutheran Historical Conference on the campus of United Lutheran Seminary at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, for our Fall program. This will be the final day of the Lutheran Historical Conference's 2024 biennial meeting taking place in Baltimore, Maryland, and Gettysburg on October 10–12. The theme for the 2024 meeting is "Lutherans Unit- ing and Dividing."

The 2024 LHC meeting (rescheduled from 2021) will return to the East Coast when it will meet at Christ Lutheran Church in the Inner Harbor of Baltimore, Maryland.

This gathering will also visit Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, the location of the largest battle of the American Civil War, fought in part on the grounds of Gettysburg Lutheran Sem- inary, now part of United Lutheran Seminary. This bienni- al meeting will commemorate several recent anniversaries, including the bicen- tennial of the General Synod (1820), the seventy-fifth anniversary of Lutheran World Relief (1945), and the eightieth anniversary of the Lutheran Immigration and Refuge Service (1939). Lunch will be provided by LHSMA.

Stay tuned for more information, including speaker and program topics and registration details!

**ANNUAL
MEETING**

Schmucker at 225, cont.

(Continued from page 1)

how Schmucker dealt with owning slaves through his marriage to Mary Steen- burgen, his second wife. The morning session concluded with the Rev. Dr. Nelson Strobert, ULS Professor Emeritus of Religious Educa- tion, delving into the rela- tionship of Schmucker and Daniel Alexander Payne. Payne was the first African American student at Gettys- burg Seminary and later be- came a bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church and helped found Wilberforce University.

Strobert noted that through the years Payne consistently referred to Schmucker as a Venerable Preceptor and valued his relationship with his former professor.

Following an excellent lunch at the Gettysburg College Dining Hall, Dr. Michael Birkner, Professor of History at Gettysburg College and the institution's historian, opened the afternoon session with a lecture entitled "Laying the Foun-



Speakers for Schmucker at 225 from L to R: Rev. Steve Herr, Dr. Michael Birkner, Dr. Teresa Smallwood, Rev. Dr. Maria Erling, Dr. Jill Oglie Titus, Bishop Matthew Riegel, Dr. Susan McCarver, and Rev. Dr. Mark Oldenburg.

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Schmucker at 225, cont.

(Continued from page 3)

ation of a Superior Education”: Samuel Simon Schmucker’s Pragmatic Vision and the Future of Gettysburg College.” Birkner highlighted how Schmucker embraced the Yale Report of 1828 and modeled Gettysburg College after much of the report’s findings. He stressed how Schmucker sought for the college to be non-sectarian.

Dr. Teresa Smallwood, James Franklin Kelly and Hope Eyster Kelly Associate Professor of Public Theology at United Lutheran Seminary, moderated the afternoon panel. Pastor Stephen Herr, Christ Lutheran Gettysburg, opened with a paper exploring Lutheran abolitionism contrasting Schmucker and the Franckean Synod. Jill Oglie Titus, associate director of the Civil War Institute at Gettysburg College, brought Schmucker’s impact into the twentieth century explored ways that Schmucker and Martin Luther King Jr. as church leaders took stands that were unpopular and while concerned with matters in America showed concern for those beyond our nation’s borders. The Rev. Matthew Riegel, Bishop of the

West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod and the LHSMA president, concluded the day by offering a reappraisal of Schmucker’s Fraternal Appeal. Riegel noted his Fraternal Appeal rises from and reflects trends in the Protestantism of the early Federal Republic, and, for modern ecumenists, it provides both inspiration and challenge.



A view of the audience during one of the Schmucker at 225 presentations in Mara Auditorium, Masters Hall of Gettysburg College

The information shared on Samuel Simon Schmucker was thought-provoking and enlightening. For those unable to participate in the conference, plans are now in the works to edit the papers presented for publication. LHSMA will share those details with the membership as they become available. In addition, the society is looking to develop further opportunities to explore Schmucker, his theology, writings, and legacy. Thanks to all who attended and supported the event. In all, Schmucker at 225 proved to be one of the Society’s most successful events to date, certainly the best in-person gathering in the post-pandemic world!





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

The Fraktur Artist and the Easter Bunny: Johann Conrad Gilbrecht

By John Deeben

Pennsylvania German Fraktur Artist Johann Conrad Gilbrecht (Gilbert) was born April 29, 1734 in Hoffenheim, Rhein-NeckarKreis, Karlsruhe, Wurttemberg, the son of Hans Georg and Anna Elizabeth (Gruber) Gilbrecht. He emigrated to America about 1750, settled initially in Berks County, Pennsylvania, and then married Anna Elizabeth Stoltz, the daughter of Johann Christian and Eva Margaretha Stoltz, at the Trappe Lutheran Church in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, on April 19, 1757. His thirteen children were all born in New Hanover Township, Montgomery County. Later, he and Anna Elizabeth removed to Orwigsburg in Schuylkill County, where they spent the remainder of their lives.

Johann Conrad was a Lutheran schoolmaster by trade, posted to several churches in Berks and Schuylkill Counties, but became much better known as a Fraktur artist, producing colorful, decorated (or illuminated) manuscripts in ink or watercolor, including birth and baptismal certificates (*Taufscheine*), family records, marriage and house blessings, writing samples (*Vorschriften*), and bookplates. In perhaps his most important contribution to the Pennsylvania German folk art, Conrad was credited with producing the earliest known American renderings of the Easter Bunny, probably as a reward of merit or *Belohnung* for one of his pupils. The one of the drawings, rendered between 1778–79, portrayed a stylized version of a hare carrying a basket of colored Easter eggs.

Gilbrecht also served in the colonial Pennsylvania Navy during the Revolutionary War. Shortly after the war

began, the Pennsylvania Committee of Safety decided to establish a naval force to protect the Delaware River and its approaches to Philadelphia from British naval incursions while that city served as the colony's capital and the seat of the Second Continental Congress. On July 6, 1775, the committee authorized the purchase and outfitting of ships for that purpose. By October, 1775, thirteen vessels, dubbed guard boats, had been built, each fitted with a single, four-pounder cannon in the bow. Thomas Read was appointed commodore of the fleet. Ten fire rafts were also built in late 1775, two of which—the Arnold and Putnam—were built as floating batteries manned by



Pennsylvania State Marines. By the end of August, 1776, the state navy consisted of 768 men manning 27 vessels.

Conrad Gilbert served as a private on the armed vessels *Eagle* and *Vulture*, both commanded by Capt. Jacob Hanse. Gilbert appeared on the muster rolls of the *Eagle* beginning July 1, 1776, and served until he was discharged on January 21, 1777 (his entry on the final muster rolls noted "time shipped for expired, not willing to stay"). On October 1, 1776, the crew of the *Eagle* transferred to the *Vulture* after the latter's original crew was reassigned to the vessel *Fame*. During his service, Gilbert spent two stints on sick leave in Philadelphia, from September 22 to October 4, and October 26 to November 14, 1776. Many years after the war, Johann Conrad Gilbert died on January 26, 1812, in Brunswick Township, Schuylkill County, and was buried at the Zion Lutheran (Red Church) cemetery in Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania. Anna Elizabeth (Stoltz) Gilbert followed him in death on August 14, 1817.



Featured Lutheran:

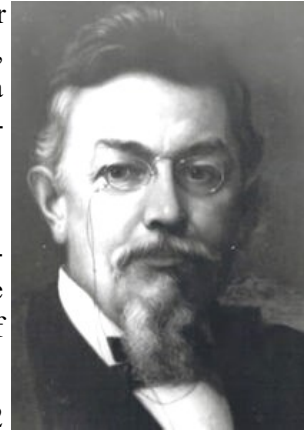
Samuel Whitaker Pennypacker

Samuel Whitaker Pennypacker was born April 9, 1843, in Phoenixville, Chester County, Pennsylvania. As a student during the Civil War, he served in Company F, 26th Pennsylvania Emergency Militia during the Gettysburg campaign, fighting in a brief skirmish north of Gettysburg on June 26, 1863. Pennypacker returned to studying law at the University of Pennsylvania, graduating in 1866.

The following year he became president of the Law Academy of Philadelphia. Pennypacker's public service began in 1885 with his appointment to the Philadelphia Board of Education. He was then admitted to the bar of the Supreme Court of the United States in 1887. Two years later he began serving a judgeship on the Court of Common Pleas of Philadelphia, becoming president judge in 1897.

In 1900 he became president of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. In 1902 Pennypacker was elected the 23rd Governor of Pennsylvania, serving from January 20, 1903 to January 15, 1907. During his term, the Child Labor Act of 1905 was approved, which set a minimum age and work standards for young factory and mine workers. He also established the Pennsylvania State Police, the first statewide police force in America.

After retiring from politics, Pennypacker opened a law office in Philadelphia. He died on September 2, 1916 at his home in Schwenksville, Montgomery County.



Membership Renewal Due

Dear Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic Members and Friends:

This is your friendly reminder that membership renewals for 2024 are now due. Payment of annual dues (\$20 per household or institution) is requested between January 1 and March 31, 2024; however, we accept new members anytime! Please feel free to use the membership form in this issue to renew or join.

For those members who have already renewed, we send you a very big **THANK YOU!!**

*Friendly
Reminder*

Don't want the hassle of remembering annual dues? Then we encourage you to consider a one-time payment of \$250 for a **LIFE MEMBERSHIP!** Both annual and LIFE memberships provide important financial support for the essential activities of the Society, including our annual meeting, scholarly programs, awarding of the Wentz and Biglerville prizes for worthy Lutheran scholarship and publications, recognition of historic Lutheran sites, and Congregational Heritage Workshops, to name a few.

Friends, if you are not a member or have received a complimentary or trial membership, we encourage you to **COME JOIN US!** We are very happy to welcome you! LHSMA is very appreciative of the involvement and support of our current members, and we are always eager to greet new members!

Lutheran Historical Society of the Mid-Atlantic

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and sharing the history of
Lutherans and Lutheranism in
the Mid-Atlantic and
surrounding areas.”*

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**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:

Matthew Riegel

info@lutheranhistoricalsociety.com

Subject: LHS Newsletter



VOLUME 35, NUMBER 1

Managing Church Records, Part VI:

Correspondence

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.

During the course of carrying on congregational business, the pastor and staff may produce or receive correspondence of various types: Ex-officio as chief executive officer of the congregation; Correspondence to and from officers of the congregation and the bishop of the synod; Personal correspondence.

Email is especially vulnerable to loss. Email that represents the policies, program, and ongoing life of the congregation should be printed out.

Place only letters that describe the program and ongoing life of the congregation in the congregation's archives.

Church Archives



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