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NEW FEATURE!

This issue of the newsletter ushers in a new feature, **Book Reviews**. The volunteer reviewer for this month is David Settje and the book he has reviewed is by none other than our new president, Mark Braun. Your suggestions for books to review are always welcome. Books on other topics of interest, such as archives and libraries, may also be reviewed. In addition, while David will be ready to review another book for the February 2005 issue, other reviewers would be welcome. – The Editor

BOOK REVIEW

Braun, Mark E. *A Tale of Two Synods: Events that Led to the Split between Wisconsin and Missouri*. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 2003.

Reviewed by David E. Settje, Concordia University – River Forest

No historians of the U.S. Lutheran tradition can escape the many splits, factions, and separate denominations that color the landscape of what too many religious scholars want to label simply “American Lutheranism.” Thankfully, the Lutheran Historical Conference (LHC) overcomes these difficulties to bring together Lutheran historians broadly defined, and thereby gains a truer sense of this otherwise ambiguous lumping. It seems fitting, therefore, that the first book review for the LHC newsletter examines one such theological division, between the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) and the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (LCMS), written by a WELS pastor, scholar, and LHC president, and reviewed by a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America who works at a Missouri Synod institution!

Mark Braun offers a personal examination of the issues that led to the collapsed relationship between the WELS and LCMS. Although an internal dialogue that often speaks poignantly to the WELS and LCMS, this solid history appeals to anyone interested in American Lutheranism. Exhaustively researched and well documented, its

sources include articles, letters, and interviews. Most of the examination scrutinizes the issue of unionism and the battle that ensued over which denomination accurately interpreted “violations” of Lutheran theology. For example, Braun ably delineates the feud over whether or not Lutherans should participate in the Boy Scouts. He also does an excellent job of placing the theological divisions between the two synods in the context of U.S. history. For example, he sets the WELS/LCMS debate over the military chaplaincy in the twentieth-century ecumenical military environment created by the various wars, especially World War II and the Cold War. Braun also brings other Lutheran bodies into the picture to show how they influenced the relationship, particularly the American Lutheran Church.

Other attributes contribute to this solid history. While discussing theological matters that hurt and frustrate the participants, Braun ably weaves a subtle sense of humor throughout. For example, his discussion of smoking and drinking includes funny stories about how various leaders balanced the fact that “saloons abounded with temptations” with the reality that many “parishioners drank beer and wine in their homes, at restaurants, and in beer gardens” (43). Braun also traces the history from the first WELS/LCMS encounters in the 1800s, which provides the long history of what divided these two bodies and particularly demonstrates the often non-theological tension between the larger LCMS and much smaller WELS that nonetheless led to occasional belittlement from the LCMS and harbored a feeling of inferiority from the WELS.

However, a bias in favor of the WELS position colors this otherwise engaging history. Braun occasionally criticizes the LCMS sharply but seldom does the same to the WELS. For example, in highlighting the LCMS’s ongoing union discussions with the American Lutheran Church in the 1940s, Braun almost blames this LCMS dialogue entirely for the continued friction, forgetting that he already outlined a century of problems that led to the tension (198-206). That being said, most of the book avoids this and offers a balanced view of each side. And this bias does little to tarnish a very engaging, well written and researched Lutheran history. Braun provides a tale of transformation within the WELS and the LCMS that begins with a shared vision, embodies a divisive theological separation, and ends with a note of hope for both church bodies.

NEWS BY/FOR/ABOUT MEMBERS

Paul Daniels, Luther Seminary, 2481 Como Ave. St. Paul, MN 55108-1496, completed his service as interim director of the Luther Seminary Library in July 2004. He had served in that capacity since August 1, 2003. David Stewart, a librarian from Princeton Theological Seminary is the new library director for Luther. Daniels served on the search committee for the new director as well.

SAME PLACE, NEW ADDRESS!

Effective October 11, 2004, the Concordia Historical Institute's new mailing address is 804 Seminary Place, St. Louis MO 63105. This is not a change in physical location. The street in front of the Institute building has been renamed in connection with changes on the Concordia Seminary campus related to the seminary's acquisition of the former CBC High School property. The street formerly called University Lane is now Seminary Place. The seminary's address has changed to 801 Seminary Place.

LHC LEADERSHIP UPDATES

In the August 2004 issue of the LHC *Newsletter*, a new leadership list was published. Since then a number of corrections have been submitted. Please take note of them:

Carolyn Hoover Sung, Treasurer

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Robert E. Smith, Annual Bibliography

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LUTHER EXHIBIT EXCEEDS 5,000 VISITORS

The final day for the public to view, "Martin Luther--The Reformer Exhibit" at the Concordia Historical Institute (CHI) on the campus of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, was September 25, 2004. It had been at CHI since July 1.st A total of 5,627 people visited the exhibit between July and September. The exhibit was particularly well-visited in September by Lutheran groups and school classes.

The exhibit began its North American journey in Winnipeg, Canada, on July 22, 2003, at the Tenth Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation. The exhibit is continuing its 12-city tour, traveling from St. Louis to the Goethe Institute, Atlanta, Georgia, in October and November. Christ the King Lutheran Church, Houston, Texas, will be the next site from December 2004 through January 2005. It will end its North American tour in Tempe, Arizona at University Lutheran Church during February 2005.

The exhibit comprises more than 100 books, manuscripts, illustrations, paintings, such as facsimiles of the Gutenberg Bible and artworks by Albrecht Durer and Lucas Cranach, Sr. Concordia Seminary offered a series of special events in conjunction with the exhibit. The events included lectures, a hymnsing, a sacred music concert; and two

Saturdays in September set aside for area pastors to bring Confirmation classes to campus for exhibit tours. Additional exhibit information is available online at: <http://www.csl.edu/LutherExhibit.htm>.

2003 INDEX of WRITINGS IN THE FIELD OF AMERICAN LUTHERANISM

Compiled by

Dr. James W. Albers, Mr. John N. Dickmeyer and Rev. Robert E. Smith

This is the latest installment of the bibliography of items related to the history of Lutheranism in America. It covers items published in the calendar year 2003 and items from prior years which were missed in previous indexes. The 2003 and previous year's bibliographies are also available on the LHC World Wide Web Home Page: <http://luthhist.org/> As in previous years, we once again appeal to LHC members for help in compiling next year's index. Although the tools of modern library research are excellent, such as searching World Cat, such searches are not, nor are they likely to become, exhaustive. Please send us citations of your own work as well as those of your colleagues. We are especially interested in local, private and unindexed theses of note. Send relevant citations to:

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Periodicals Indexed

Archives Advocate

Canadian Lutheran <http://www.lutheranchurch-canada.ca/canluth/>

Church History <http://www.churchhistory.org/journal/>

Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly

Concordia Journal <http://www.csl.edu/Publications.htm>

Concordia Theological Quarterly <http://www.ctsfw.edu/ctq>

Cresset <http://www.valpo.edu/cresset/>

Currents in Theology and Mission <http://www.lstc.edu/resources/publications/currents/>

Dialog

Faith and Fellowship

Faith-Life

First Things

Forward in Christ :Northwestern Lutheran <http://www.wels.net/nlarch/search.pl>

Logia <http://www.logia.org/>

Lutheran Education

Lutheran Forum

Lutheran Quarterly <http://www.lutheranquarterly.com>
Lutheran Synod Quarterly <http://www.blts.edu/Publications/publctn.html>
Lutheran Witness <http://www.lcms.org/witness/>
Missio Apostolica <http://www.lsfmissiology.org/MissioApostolica.htm>
Seminary Ridge Review
<http://www.ltsg.edu/db/index.htm?dir=pubs&page=articles&cat=review>
Theologia (Mequon, Wisconsin)
<http://www.wls.wels.net/Publications/Theologia/theoindex.htm>
Trinity Seminary Review
WELS Historical Institute Quarterly
Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly <http://www.wls.wels.net/Publications/WLQ/wlqindex.htm>
Word and World <http://www.luthersem.edu/word&world/AuthorIndex.shtm>

Titles Not Available at Time of Indexing

Not available in the Concordia Theological Seminary Library at the time of indexing:

Consensus: A Canadian Lutheran Journal of Theology
For the Record: The Newsletter of the Canadian Lutheran Historical Association
JEDP
Journal of the New England Lutheran Historical Society
Lutheran Ambassador
Lutheran Partners

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This newsletter will be able to fulfill its intended purpose of being a clearinghouse of information for archivists, historians and librarians only if **you** provide material for it.

Please use this page (or as many additional ones as needed) to send material for publication to the editor. Items of interest to readers will include notice of research in progress, new appointments, publications, meetings and celebrations planned or held, bibliographical materials and generally anything of interest to LHC members.

The editor cannot promise to print everything received, although all submissions are welcomed. The LHC Newsletter is issued four times a year: February, May, August and November. The November issue includes the annual "Index of Writings in the Field of American Lutheranism." The deadline for each issue is the 15th of the month prior to each issue. Please send items to: Elisabeth Wittman, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Archives, 8765 W. Higgins Rd., Chicago, IL 60631, or FAX: 773-380-2977; or E-mail: Elisabeth.Wittman@elca.org

FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER

DEADLINE: January 15, 2005

From:

(Name)

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