

SUPPORT COMMITTEES

ARCHIVES

We often think of archives work as dull, carried out in confining spaces, and encountering the dusty records of the past. And there is some of that kind of work to be sure. But since the time of our last assembly, the biggest news from the Archives has to do with an exciting (not dull) canoe trip on the Schuylkill River (not a confining space) during which the travelers encountered birds, fish, and newspaper reporters (not dusty records).

This reference is to the fundraising journey proposed by Bishop Zeiser and carried out by Pastor and Mrs. Bruce Osterhout, the Bishop, and me on July 15, 2010. The trip was intended to raise funds for the restoration/preservation of Henry M. Muhlenberg's original journals; and this canoe project did raise not only \$6,000+ (enough to preserve an entire volume of the journals), it also raised the public's awareness of this need and of the work of Pastor Muhlenberg.

The total preservation project has been a success. Enough money will be received through donations to match the grant that will cover the other half of the almost \$200,000 needed for this project. In these days of tight budgets and reduced incomes, such a commitment to preservation is outstanding.

It is also timely. In 2011 we are celebrating the 300th anniversary of the birth of Muhlenberg, who was the pre-eminent Lutheran clergyperson in North America in the eighteenth century. That celebration will be evident during the 2011 Synod Assembly and at many special events being held this year, such as at the Philadelphia Seminary on September 6, by Muhlenberg College, and others.

But the Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia, of which our synod is a part, is much more than Muhlenberg. The Center deals with many routine matters, such as the preservation of more recent congregational records. Obviously, when congregations close, their records are supposed to come to the Archives Center, which is located in the Brossman Center at the Philadelphia Seminary. St. Paul, Gordon, deposited their records, for example, as they go through the process of closing. But sometimes very lively congregations want their records kept in that secure location. When records are given to the Archives Center for safekeeping, we simply ask for a donation of at least \$3,000, a kind of "perpetual care" fund to pay for the ongoing storage of those records in a way that makes them accessible to researchers.

The Archives Center is overseen by a board that includes official representatives of the member synods here in Region Seven of the ELCA. I am honored to be our synod's affiliated director. Three other persons from our synod are also present as non-affiliated directors: Mrs. Elizabeth H. Bagger, the Reverend Richard B. Baumann, and the Reverend Virginia Biniek—the Three Bs of the Archives.

Thank you for your support of the synod's archival work (including the canoe project) and for taking care of your own congregation's heritage of documents and records, significant physical items from the past, and ongoing ministry. Every congregation has its own important records that need protection as a way to honor the past and inform the future.

Carl D. Shankweiler, archivist

INTERIM MINISTRY COMMITTEE FOR CONGREGATIONS IN TRANSITION

The Interim Ministry Committee for Congregations in Transition has the responsibility of providing educational support of interim pastors and advising the Bishop and synod staff on policy and procedure with regard to the work of interim pastors in congregations that experience times of transition. The committee meets quarterly in March, June, September, and December.

Additionally, the committee promotes interim ministry as a viable resource for congregations in transition by providing promotional materials and media resources for use by synod staff and mission district deans.

In discharging its educational responsibility, the committee arranges quarterly consultation meetings for interim pastors in which they are informed of the latest developments in interim ministry programs and educational events. Additionally, various aspects of congregational life and ministry skills are examined and discussed. In the past year, these meetings included the following programs:

- March – Discussion with Bishop Samuel Zeiser about the work of interim ministry as it relates to the work of the Bishop's office.
- June – Discussion of the Fifth Process Task of an Intentional Interim Pastor Dealing with Exiting and Evaluation.

- September – A presentation by the Rev. Dr. Andrew E. Carlsson dealing with church size as it relates to congregational dynamics.
- December – A presentation by The Rev. Dr. Walter Wagner on “Basics and Questions about Islam.”

Items considered by the committee in 2010 included:

- Arranging a more formal process by which candidates for training are reviewed and presented to the Bishop for final approval.
- Addressing the issue of improving a process of introduction of Intentional Interim Ministry to congregations facing transition.
- Recommending three candidates for the Bishop’s approval for Intentional Interim Pastor training.
- Working with the Bishop to establish a clear process by which Intentional Interim Pastors are called to special service.
- Preparing for the synod annual assembly presentations.
- Receiving the resignation of Kathryn “Kit” Hall as a member of the Interim Ministry Committee.
- Initiating contact with Region 7 regarding opportunities to address first call pastors about Intentional Interim Ministry process and goals.

Henry K. Wohlgemuth, chair

Raymond C. Hittinger, interim ministry coordinator