Inside:
- Library Acquires Rare Zürich Bible
- The Promise and Challenge of Nonresistance
- Anabaptists during the Revolution

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Good Books for Sale at Winter Bookfest

Need a good book to read during the long winter evenings? Come to the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society’s second Winter Bookfest. The sale of used books will take place on Thursday, February 16, from 3 PM to 8 PM; Friday, February 17, from 9 AM to 8 PM; and Saturday, February 18, from 9 AM to 4:30 PM.

The Winter Bookfest is a smaller indoor version of the popular summer Bookworm Frolic and will feature some of the most popular categories sold in the Frolic. These include books for children, fiction, religious books, history, politics, Christian fiction, theological works, books related to Mennonites and Amish, plus many more.

Hardcover books will be sold for $3; paperbacks and children's small hardbacks will sell for $1.50. New books will be put out each day.

Throughout the sale there will be discounts on select new items in the Society Bookstore which will be open during the entire Winter Bookfest.

At 2 PM on Saturday, February 18, author Ken Yoder Reed will give a dramatized monologue as Greenywalt, the main character of his new historical novel, “Both My Sons.” This novel is about the Anabaptists and Scots-Irish who settled the southeastern Pennsylvania region in early to mid-eighteenth century. Reed will speak from the stage in the museum, which is also a reconstructed original eighteenth-century log house, prominent in the story of “Both My Sons.”

The Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society is located at 2215 Millstream Road, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, next to Tanger Outlets on Lincoln Highway East. Parking is available in the Society parking lot. The Winter Bookfest will take place snow or shine. This event is free and open to the public; no registration is necessary.

Brubaker to Speak at Annual Banquet

“It is important to celebrate Lancaster County,” says Rolando Santiago, executive director of the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, “and to remember the significance of historical reflection.” Learn and reflect on Lancaster County history and culture during this year’s Annual Banquet of the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society, featuring Jack Brubaker. He will share on the topic “Ten of My Favorite Historical Anecdotes about Lancaster County.” The banquet will be held at 6 PM on Saturday, March 25.

Tickets cost $30 and can be purchased using the form on page 3, at lmhs.org, or by calling (717) 393-9745. The deadline for registration is Saturday, March 18.

Brubaker has been a journalist in Danville, Virginia, and Lancaster, Pennsylvania, since 1970. He retired as an investigative reporter for Lancaster Newspapers three years ago. He continues to write “The Scribbler” column for LNP. Brubaker has written a dozen books and magazine articles, including “Remembering Lancaster County,” published by the History Press in 2010. He is at work on a book about reconciliation between the North and South between the Civil and Spanish-American Wars. A native of Bird-in-Hand, Brubaker lives with his wife, Christine, a teacher and conservationist, in Manor Township.

Janneken Smucker, assistant professor of history at West Chester University and author of “Amish Quilts: Crafting an American Icon,” will also share a brief testimonial on “Why I Love History.”

The evening will be rounded out with music provided by the Kravets family. These five Ukrainian multi-instrumentalists will sing a capella and perform as a string ensemble and brass quintet.

The banquet will take place at DoubleTree Resort Banquet Hall in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 2400 Willow Street Pike, Lancaster, Pa.

Leave a Legacy

Help to sustain and grow our historical collections and educational programs by including Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society in your will, your Individual Retirement Account, your pension, your life insurance policy, or your trust. By doing so, you will help to shape and ensure our future—as well as a legacy for you and your family.

For more information, contact us at PlannedGiving@lmhs.org. Thanks so much.
Educational Meeting Looks at “The Promise and Challenge of Nonresistance”

Turning the other check is a concept Jesus used and is taken to heart by persons who believe in nonresistance as a guiding biblical injunction. Throughout the centuries, this belief has remained the bedrock upon which practices of Anabaptist justice have grown. Explore how the practice of nonresistance has changed and how it has remained the same during “The Promise and Challenge of Nonresistance” on Monday, February 20, at 7 pm at Blossom Hill Mennonite Church. Titus Peachey, Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz, and Kevin Ressler will share from a wide range of experience with conscientious objection and advocacy.

Peachey says Mennonites have moved “from a narrow focus on conscientious objection and alternative service during a time of war to an outward focus on the transformation of policies and systems that lead to war.”

Titus Peachey is a longtime peace activist, starting with service as a conscientious objector in Vietnam during the war. Subsequently he worked with Mennonite Central Committee (M.C.C.) in Laos. He has recently retired from M.C.C., where he worked with for thirty-five years, most recently as director of peace education. He has also served as a counselor on the GI Rights Hotline.

Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz is the codirector of the Office on Crime and Justice for M.C.C. She has worked in the field of victim-offender mediation since 1984 and consults for restorative justice programs that have a victim-offender mediation component. She is the author of “The Little Book of Victim Offender Conferencing” and coauthor of “What Will Happen To Me” with Howard Zehr.

Kevin M. Ressler, M.Div., holds a B.A. in justice, peace, and conflict studies from Eastern Mennonite University where he also studied theater. Both before and after those studies, he focused on using stories to help open people to longer-term solutions. As a community activist and advocate, Ressler seeks to provide safe space and opportunities for marginalized members of society to have access to dignity through the power structures that exist inside and outside the church.

Library Acquires Rare 1755 Zürich Bible

Late last year the library was given an exceptionally rare copy of the Bible, printed by Andreas Gessner in Zürich, Switzerland, in 1555. I find only one other copy of this printing in WorldCat, the online union catalog of thousands of libraries worldwide. Its rarity was confirmed by Dr. Urs Leu, rare books librarian at the Central Library in Zürich, who added that the translation Gessner printed is very similar to that printed by his contemporary, Christopher Froschauer. Despite a lack of direct evidence, Leu says that he would not be surprised if the early Swiss Brethren used Gessner’s printing as well as Froschauer’s.

Bound in full leather with brass corners and clasps (straps missing), our copy is missing two leaves in the first section and several pages are loose. Passed down through a Lancaster County Hess family, the copy was part of accession 2016.068, which included a sampler stitched by Mary Hertzler, ca. 1837-1848. The Bible includes handwritten records of a damaging hail storm (August 11, 1602), heavy frost in the vineyards in 1602, and comet sightings in 1680-1681 and 1743-1744.

We know what the book is; however, its historical ownership is not clear. While oral tradition suggests that it was a Hess family, I find no Hess names in the Bible. There is, however, a list of persons with the name Byers: Jacob, Cadarainea, Mary, Henry, Nancy, Barbara, Matty, [Easter?], [illegible entry]. A date of 1796 (possibly 1790) is at the head of this list. Was this perhaps a Byer(s)/Boyer(s) family Bible which became associated with the Hesses through marriage? Is “Matty” the Magdalena Boyer/Byer who married David Hess (1784-1873)? If you have any information about this mystery I would be very glad to know. I can be reached by email (library@lmhs.org) or by phone (717.393.9745, ext. 202).
Love of Enemies: Anabaptists during the Revolution

Rolando Santiago, director

In “My Loyalist Origins” (2015), Herb Swartz, retired Bible professor from Eastern Mennonite University, tells the story of one of his American Mennonite ancestors, Christopher Schwartz, who emigrated from southeastern Pennsylvania to Ontario, Canada, after the Revolutionary War. He, along with other Mennonite, Quaker, and Tunker (River Brethren) families, migrated to Canada to be under the rule of a king as God commanded and because land was available for purchase, especially for members of religious groups who did not bear arms during the war for American independence.

According to Samuel J. Steiner, author of “In Search of Promised Lands: A Religious History of Mennonites in Ontario” (2015), Pennsylvania Mennonite and Amish male “nonassociators” who refused to join American militia groups were assessed heavy taxes throughout the Revolutionary War, starting in late 1776. Those who refused to give “assurance of allegiance” to the Revolutionary government, a requirement of the Test Act of June 1777, were not allowed to vote, hold office, sue for debt, or transfer real estate by deed. During the war, overzealous local Revolutionary committees confiscated or destroyed property, and even jailed those who did not give assurance of loyalty.

The Revolutionary War tested the commitment of Mennonites and Amish to follow Jesus teaching to “love your enemies.” Some faltered, joined other denominations, and fought with majorities who enrolled in the Revolutionary militias.

In today’s troubled times, how firmly are we willing to follow Jesus, especially his call to love our enemies?

But even more basic, how do we define today the enemy whom Christ wants us to love? Is the enemy a Muslim, an immigrant, a national leader opposed to our Anabaptist values, a person identifying as LGBT, someone committed to kill in military uniform? We often do not agree on who the enemy is. So we ask deep within ourselves: Who is a follower of Jesus?

Will you help create Anabaptist communities of faith that ask God’s Spirit to dwell among us, study Scriptures together, and discern in community how to follow Jesus faithfully and how to love our enemies around us, no matter who they may be?

Annual Banquet Registration

I would like _____ tickets for the Annual Banquet at $30 each

Attendees must make a selection of one of the following three tasty entrees when they make their reservations: marinated chicken, parsley-and-horseradish-crusted salmon, roast beef with red wine demi glaze. Each meal also includes a salad, rolls, marinated seasonal vegetables & quinoa, and chocolate cake.

Entree selection: [ ] Chicken [ ] Salmon [ ] Roast Beef

My check is payable to Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society.

Please charge my: [ ] Visa [ ] MasterCard [ ] Discover

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Register online at www.lmhs.org or by calling (717) 393-9745. The sale will be held at the Society headquarters, starting at 6:30 pm. Absentee bids are accepted until Thursday, March 9, at 4:30 pm.

Learn Pennsylvania Dutch

Preservation of the distinctive language tradition of early German immigrants to Lancaster County continues at the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society. “Butch” Reigart will serve as the instructor for two ten-week courses on different levels this spring.

A beginner class will meet on Thursdays, March 9 to May 11, 7 to 9 pm. An intermediate class is also offered Saturdays, March 11 to May 13, 10 am to 12 pm. Both classes take place at 2215 Millstream Road, Lancaster, on Route 30 (Lincoln Highway East), beside Tanger Outlet Center. Those familiar with German have an advantage and can usually start at the intermediate level.

Register online at www.lmhs.org or by calling (717) 393-9745. Basic instructional materials are included in the course fee of $100 for Historical Society members and $115 for nonmembers.

“Martyrs’ Mirror” Featured at March 10 Auction

A 1748 Ephrata “Martyrs’ Mirror” will be sold at the March 10, 2017, book auction. In addition, two 1814 “Martyrs’ Mirrors” are included in the sale and an 1886 edition.

Another hard-to-find book to be sold is the “Jonas Martin Era, 1875-1925” in very good condition.

Some other important German-language books are “Der Sänger am Grabe,” published in Ephrata in 1827 by Joseph Bauman, and a Marburger “Gesangbuch,” published by Christopher Saur in 1762.

There are two “Earth Is the Lord’s” being sold along with a 2006 “Historical Atlas of Lancaster County,” a reprint of the 1899 atlas.

Full catalogs are available at www.lmhs.org or by calling (717) 393-9745.