



# ARCHIVES *Advocate*

Northeast Regional Archives • Evangelical Lutheran Church in America • Vol. 6 No. 1, WINTER 2021

## Progress and Change in the Archives

by *Kim-Eric Williams*

It is hard to imagine that it was thirty-five years ago when I was first made aware of the Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia. Pastor Robert Brusich of Trinity Church in New Haven, Conn., was then president of the board and invited me to attend as the president of the New England Lutheran Historical Society. As a Church historian, I found the meetings fascinating with such luminaries as Helmut Lehmann and E. Theodore (Ted) Bachman, to say nothing of the extensive reports by curator John E. Peterson. By 1989 I joined the Board, initially representing New England and later Southeastern Pennsylvania.

In the fall of 1999, I was asked to become editor of a new publication that was to be sent to all pastors and leaders in the Northeast. The *Archives Advocate* became a vehicle for the Archives to spread the word about its work and to honor significant ministries in the Northeast. It was particularly important when we were fundraising for the restoration of the Muhlenberg Journals (2009–11) and for our Justus Falckner celebration and publications in 2003.

With the building of the Brossman Center on the Philadelphia campus we were able to finally move out of our cramped and outgrown quarters in the basement of the Krauth Memorial Library in 2005. It was at this time that I became a salaried part-time employee of the Archives, assisting with the move. There was

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## FROM THE DIRECTOR

by *Lisa Minardi*

Dear Readers,

As we enter the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Lutheran Archives Center continues to prepare for the future and making our collection more accessible than ever. Our staff is hard at work on multiple projects that will take us through 2021 and beyond. With the need for remote access more important than ever, we are prioritizing efforts to get our collections database online by the end of this year. Stay tuned as we progress towards this goal.

Danielle McCleary, a ULS graduate, is wrapping up a project to process the papers of Rev. Henry Eyster Horn—whose ministry covered more than seventy years. Although the Archives is best known for housing congregational records, we also preserve the personal papers of various Lutheran ministers and laypeople. As we process these papers, finding aids will be made and put on our website for researchers to explore. Danielle’s next big project will be working with the contents of the Augustana Museum (*see image, left*), which will be photographed, cataloged, and shared online in a searchable database. She will also continue work on our research library, in particular the collection of Swedish books, and adding that information into our forthcoming online database. We are grateful to the Augustana Institute for their support of these efforts.

Sheila Joy, our associate archivist, handles our genealogy requests and research inquiries—which have increased

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Partial view of the Augustana Museum

# Greetings from our new Archivist

By Sheila Joy

It has been a very productive year in the archives! There has been exponential progress made in both processing collections and the creation of finding aids and inventories. One of my first tasks was to create a procedure so that every new collection we receive is properly accessioned and prepared for processing. Since my arrival, we have received more than two dozen new unprocessed collections—sixteen of them congregation records—that have been put through this new procedure.

Danielle McCleary, a ULS graduate, is making great progress in processing the Henry Horn Collection. She has started a finding aid which will be available on our website when completed. ULS student Courtney Smith is discovering many new treasures while inventorying our oversized records and artifacts—thanks to an ELCA regional archives grant.

Many congregation collections were processed this year, including Epiphany Lutheran Church (Roxborough, PA). Other records nearing completion are Grace (Norristown, PA), Holy Cross (Philadelphia), Zion (Nesquehoning, PA), and St. Paul (Catasauqua, PA). All of this progress could not be made with the help of our archives assistants, Courtney and Danielle, and our gracious volunteers, Linda Beck and Phyllis Linn.

Research inquiries have also been flooding in almost daily. With people staying at home due to the pandemic, there has been a surge in family history research. Much time goes into carefully tending to these requests, including replying to emails and phone calls, conducting reference work, checking inventory listings, carrying out research, and making high-quality scans.

This uptick in research inquiries has made evident the need to create collection inventory listings for the



Associate Archivist Sheila Joy at work in the Archives office.

public. Having such lists available on our website would allow researchers to see what records we have without needing to contact us first. I am creating these listings at the county level based on the many questions from patrons asking what records we have from a certain county. Berks County, PA has been completed and is available in PDF format. Next up will be Southeastern and Northeastern PA Synod counties, New Jersey Synod, and so on. A list of our holdings for St. Michaels & Zion, Philadelphia, is also now available as it is one of our most highly requested collections.

On top of all this, we manage to squeeze in weekly Facebook posts to maintain and grow our online presence. Folks seem to particularly enjoy our quick archives tips and Friday Finds from the Vault. The impact of COVID-19 also continues to be felt. All in-person work has been suspended since November 21 in accordance with the ULS campus shutdown and Philadelphia's Safer at Home restrictions. The safety and wellbeing of our community and staff is of utmost importance and I am grateful that there is plenty of work that can be done remotely.

Associate Archivist Sheila Joy returns the parish registers of Mulberry Street Evangelical Lutheran Church, Newark, NJ, to the vault after conducting genealogy research on behalf of a patron.



# The Henry Eyster Horn Collection

By Danielle McCleary

This fall I started processing the papers of Rev. Henry Eyster Horn (1913–2007). Our new archivist, Sheila Joy, trained me on the ins and outs of best archival processing practices. Thankfully, Henry Horn was also a highly organized man. He indexed just about everything, including his notebooks on readings, sermons, lectures, course materials, correspondence, and more. As I await my first call, I enjoy the eye-opening experience of learning how useful it is in the long-term to stay organized. Horn's focus on organizing has helped me understand how he stayed engaged as a father, pastor, advocate, friend, and chair of several committees throughout his lifetime.

Researchers using this collection will learn about Horn's extensive ministry in Boston, Georgia, and Churchwide. It was refreshing for me to discover that Horn was an advocate for the ordination of women, writing several essays and appeals to help push it forward. His advocacy did not stop there. Horn did not shy away from writing, lecturing, and engaging in committees that talked about topics such as racism, sexism, and homophobia in our Church and nation and what to do about it. Horn was also very passionate about Campus Ministry. With its inception in the 1970s, Horn was a major voice in this movement. He wrote several papers, gave lectures, and served as a delegate to the World Council of Churches for Campus Ministry.

Many readers likely know that Horn lived to celebrate his 70th ordination anniversary before he died in 2007. He was a faith leader during such a pivotal time in our nation's history and worked tirelessly to ensure that all were welcome in our Church for decades. I have learned so much from this project and think that all of us can glean some wisdom from Horn. Especially in our current global situation, living out our faith publicly and advocating for others is something we are all called to as Children of God.



Archival boxes housing the Henry Horn Collection after processing



Uls graduate Danielle McCleary processing papers from the Horn Collection

*From the Director (continued from page 1)*

greatly over the past year. She is compiling county-by-county listings of our congregational records. She has also compiled a detailed list of the records we hold from St. Michael's and Zion, Philadelphia. These will be made available on our website and should be of great help to genealogists and researchers to see what relevant records we may or may not have at the archives. Sheila has also implemented a streamlined process for documenting all incoming collections and has worked with multiple synod offices to share guidelines for the preservation of congregational records.

Uls student Courtney Smith has been exploring every nook and cranny of our main vault, searching for oversize objects to inventory, photograph, and catalogue. These objects include everything from communion vessels to shovels used in groundbreaking ceremonies as well as many framed documents, artworks, and photographs. Because the compact shelving in our main vault is designed for storing standard size bankers boxes, oversize objects were often relegated to back corners or squeezed onto bottom shelves where they were crowded and inaccessible. Now they are being relocated to more commodious shelving in a second vault; some oversize documents and photographs are also being unframed and placed into archival folders within a large flat file drawer unit. We are grateful for an ELCA regional archives grant to help fund this project.

To help us continue with these efforts to preserve and share the diverse collections in our care as widely as possible, we need your help. Your donations enable us to hire Uls students to assist with these projects, helping us to fulfill our mission and providing valuable, hands-on experiences for Uls students interested in Lutheran history. Please consider making a donation to support the Lutheran Archives Center, either online at [lacphila.org/donate](http://lacphila.org/donate) or via check in the enclosed envelope. Thank you for your support!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lisa Minardi".

Lisa Minardi  
Executive Director

# Oversize Artifacts Project

*By Courtney Smith*



Oversize objects have been relocated to more commodious shelving

I am excited to spend my final year of seminary back in the Archives after completing my pastoral internship in Massachusetts last year. My current project is working to catalog and organize the oversized artifacts in our collection—many of them having come along with congregational records—thanks to an ELCA regional archives grant. These could be photographs, communion vessels, awards, plaques, and other important mementos that help tell the history of a congregation. The Archives recently acquired some extra space in a second vault which has allowed me to process these items and work to get a better understanding of everything we have.

We have established a section in Vault 2 that is rapidly becoming home to framed artwork, oversized objects ranging from chairs to signs, photograph collections, and important historical documents such as certificates, charters, and architectural blueprints. Every item is given a number for tracking and is placed in archival folders for safety. The hope is to get most of these items into suitable archival boxes for their long-term preservation as it becomes clear what the scope of our oversize holdings is and resources become available.

It is truly a delight to look at these old photographs and see the way churches did ministry in the past. In 2021 we are all figuring out how to be the body of Christ and do ministry together while being physically apart. Looking back on these old ministry programs has been a constant reminder that change and adaptation is a crucial part of the church; Jesus didn't give up trying to spread the Gospel, and neither will we.

Shovels, plaques, wooden boxes, communion vessels, trophies, and sculptures are just some of the objects being found scattered throughout our collection.



## Progress and Change in the Archives *(continued from page 1)*

a lot of work to do. We inherited an unpainted and unfurnished basement. It took us three years until we were ready for an official dedication. The closing of Nativity Church in Chester, Pa. and Holy Cross in Philadelphia came just as we were searching for office furnishings, and their ministries live on every day as we continue to use their desks, tables, and chairs. A talented seminarian even painted the walls of our new space, which were further enlivened by artwork found among our holdings.

Our new movable shelf system enabled us to organize the collection for the first time in some formal way and to set up a research library. This was a dream come true. We had more space than we needed, allowing us to invite other non-profits to rent space and provide a new revenue source. The Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania was our first tenant and then the

Swedish Colonial Society and Gloria Dei Old Swedes Church. The addition of the Metropolitan New York Synod's archives in 2013 fulfilled our goal to serve as the archives for the entire Northeast region.

A special interest of mine was the Augustana Institute, founded by the Seminary and the Archives in 2009 with the idea of setting aside a room as a museum to celebrate the more than 200 congregations of the Swedish tradition in the Northeast. I had served two years in the Church of Sweden and was teaching Swedish at the University of Pennsylvania so it was a natural connection. In 1995, the Archives inherited 80 archival boxes from the New York and New England Conferences that had been housed at Upsala College. In 2015, we were asked by the Augustana Heritage Association to host their closing gathering the following June.

This invitation gave the Augustana Council a new focus and we were able to collect many significant items to display in our Augustana Museum on the third floor of the Brossman Center. It was dedicated by Swedish bishop Jonas Jonsson in 2016 as a part of the Augustana Heritage Gathering.

Now a new chapter is opening for the Archives. We finally have two professional staff members and a dedicated team of student assistants and volunteers to process incoming records. We are digitizing our collection and making progress on many fronts. I have agreed to remain as a non-stipendiary curator of the Augustana Institute and Museum as we continue to find inspiration and renewal from our shared experiences in the past.

Kim-Eric Williams  
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## Oversize Artifacts Project *(continued from page 4)*



ULS student Courtney Smith carefully places a 200-year old congregational charter into an archival folder



Oversize photographs and other documents are now stored in a flat file drawer unit

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## Newsletter of the Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia

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## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

A New Year provides us with an opportunity to look back and to look forward. The same is true for this issue of the *Archives Advocate*. We gratefully look back on the development of the Lutheran Archives Center through the eyes of our recently retired archivist, Kim-Eric Williams (who also served as editor of the *Advocate*). We are happy that Kim-Eric will continue to serve as curator of the Augustana Museum. We also look ahead with a report by our new archivist, Sheila Joy, who has been quite busy since coming on board last year. Articles from our executive director, Lisa Minardi, and our two ULS student workers round out this issue, speaking to the present work of the Archives and plans for the future.

Even in the midst of a global pandemic, looking back and looking ahead is what we do at the Archives. We preserve the documentary history of Northeastern Lutheranism as we were chartered to do more than 40 years ago. In this New Year, we continue to serve the Lutheran Church within our region and beyond. We invite your inquiries and research requests, and we pray for the time when we can welcome researchers back in person to the Archives. Through it all, we ask your continued prayers and financial support in this ministry. Stay safe and keep the faith!

Respectfully,

J. Francis Watson  
President of the Board