



ARCHIVES *Advocate*

Northeast Regional Archives • Evangelical Lutheran Church in America • Vol. 8 No. 1, Summer/Fall 2023

Ancestry.com Digitization Project Update We Want Your Congregation to Participate!

by Sheila Joy, Archivist

If you have not been keeping up with the latest happenings on our social media pages, we have been keeping a little secret. We are thrilled to announce that we are partnering with Ancestry.com to digitize all of our church records! Soon birth/baptism, confirmation, marriage, and death records from hundreds of congregations across ELCA Region 7 will be made fully searchable online via Ancestry.com.

Ancestry has provided an in-house digitization specialist, Megan Genovese, who is working on-site in our reference library. Her set-up includes a 6-foot table, laptop, and scanning equipment. Every visitor who has witnessed the scanner is shocked at how fast the process is. We have estimated Megan's workload thus far to be well over 1,500 volumes. Megan started scanning in October 2022 and so far has scanned the records we have in-house from four synods: New Jersey, New England, Upstate New York, and Slovak-Zion. She is currently in the middle of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod and will then be moving onto Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, Metropolitan New York Synod, private pastor registers, and the Ministerium of Pennsylvania Collection. We initially thought the scanning would only last six months. But we are finding that there are just so many records to be scanned, and are now



Ancestry.com digitization specialist Megan Genovese scans the records of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church from Allentown, PA, which existed from 1890–2014. These digitized records will be transcribed, indexed, and made available online through Ancestry.com's database.

estimating the scanning to continue through 2023 and likely beyond. Once the records are scanned, the next step is for Ancestry to transcribe and index them. They also translate them as needed, as we have many records in German as well as Swedish, Norwegian, Finnish, Slovak, and some in Hungarian and Spanish.

We have also opened up this project by inviting active congregations within the ELCA Region 7 to participate and that means you! So far we have had 20 congregations deliver their records to us to be scanned. Why participate? First and foremost, you will be preserving your congregation's history and ensuring its safekeeping. These records are vulnerable to natural disasters, fires, floods, and so on—thus a digital copy of your church's historical records ensures that the data is never lost. It also preserves the original records by minimizing the need for handling them. You'll also save time as your historical records will be made accessible to researchers online without having to maintain your own website. Please notify us immediately if you are interested in participating in the digitization project so that we can add your records to the schedule. Contact info@lutheranarchives.org for more information.

St. John's English Lutheran Church Records Processed

by Juliana Rhinehart, Processing Archivist

Last September, I began my new role as the processing archivist at the Lutheran Archives by organizing and processing records from St. John's (English) Evangelical Lutheran Church, Philadelphia, which was founded in 1806 and closed in 2001. This was the oldest English-speaking Lutheran church in the United States and we wanted to process its records as soon as possible due to the congregation's important historical role. The collection ultimately filled eighty boxes, along with several large, unboxed items, and I discovered some fascinating and unique items that I'm proud to have had a part in preserving. In my previous archival work, the largest collection I processed was only seven or eight boxes, so figuring out how to tackle all of St. John's records was a challenge! It was a fantastic learning experience, however, and I've learned a lot about the importance of preserving church records and why archivists do the work we do.

I began processing the St. John's collection by picking up where archives volunteer Linda Beck left off. Before I started working here, Linda had already sorted and grouped all of the paper records by topic, so I used her work to create a finding aid and organize the collection into topical series. This is one of my favorite parts of processing records—I love thinking about how the materials will be used and creating a system that will help future researchers easily find the information they need. The ELCA also provides a suggested hierarchy of how to organize congregational records, beginning with the parish records, then the administrative records, and so on. As I organized the records into folders and boxes, I found parish registers, membership statistics, and pew subscriptions; property documents and blueprints for the church building; Bibles and hymnals, including a pulpit Bible

from 1797 and hymnals written in braille; and photographs from as early as 1917. I found myself thinking about all the different ways these materials will be used for research. Parish registers and pew subscriptions are, of course, immensely useful for genealogical research, while blueprints, property documents, and historical sketches can shed light on the history of the church building and the congregation as a whole. One particular project these records will be part of is the Archives' partnership with Ancestry.com, which is working to digitize vital congregational records. I'm happy to say that St. John's records will be scanned by Ancestry and available online in the next few years!

After organizing and boxing these paper records, I moved onto processing objects from this collection. This entailed photographing and measuring all of the non-paper materials, describing them in

our PastPerfect database, and wrapping them in acid-free tissue paper and taking other steps to properly store them. Some of the more unique items I found include a set of type used to make prints, a steel wafer cutter and knives for communion preparation, a display box with a lock from the original church door, a silk banner from 1907, and a wooden chair used by Sunday school teachers. Photographing and describing these and other objects was another part of this project that I enjoyed. I find a lot of value in making archival records widely accessible, and I'm thrilled that beyond our project with Ancestry.com, the Lutheran Archives has our own website and online database where we can share records with the public. I'm excited to finish getting the collection posted online and seeing what other research questions it can help answer!

The St. John's English collection includes many artifacts in addition to documents. Cataloging these objects and putting images of them into our online database is an important step in making them accessible to scholars. This silver chalice was presented to St. John's by Peter Lex in 1818. It was made by Thomas Fletcher and Sidney Gardiner, two of the leading silversmiths in Philadelphia at the time, and bears their mark on the interior.



Photos by Gavin Ashworth



Photos by Gavin Ashworth

This communion wafer cutter is engraved around the side with an inscription presenting it to the newly-formed St. John's congregation in 1808 from Jno. Goodman.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Readers,

The Lutheran Archives Center is a hive of activity these days! So many exciting projects are underway, in particular the digitization partnership with Ancestry.com to scan many of the records in our vault. We have opened this project up to active congregations as well. Please contact us at info@lutheranarchives.org right away if you are interested in participating. We will be happy to answer any questions and provide more information.

Looking ahead to the celebration of the U.S. Semiquincentennial or “America 250” in 2026, we continue to prioritize work on the records of historic Philadelphia congregations including St. Michael’s Germantown, St. John’s English, and St. Michael’s and Zion. Our goal is to have these records fully processed, rehoused in suitable archival containers, digitized, and with detailed finding aids available online. We are also in dialogue with other Philadelphia-based projects for the America 250, such as the Revolutionary City portal, to explore how we can share these records far and wide.

Meanwhile we continue to receive records from newly closed congregations, upwards to twenty per year. This influx—some 300 or more banker’s boxes of records per year—is rapidly filling up the remaining space in our vault. Our staff and volunteers are continually working on processing these records, which helps to consolidate them, but we know that eventually we will run out of room and must prepare for that reality.

Please help us to preserve the history of the Lutheran Church in America by making a financial contribution to support our work. Donations help fund our processing staff and purchase archival supplies—both of which are greatly needed. Please consider making a generous donation to support the Lutheran Archives Center, either online at LutheranArchives.org or in the enclosed envelope.

Sincerely,



Lisa Minardi
Executive Director

Thank you for your support!

Juliana Rhinehart Hired as Processing Archivist

We'd like to welcome our new Processing Archivist, Juliana Rhinehart! Juliana started working at the Lutheran Archives in September 2022 and has processed several collections so far, including the congregational records of St. John's English Lutheran Church, Philadelphia, and the Henkel Family Papers collection. She is currently working on the records of St. Michael's Lutheran Church, Germantown, PA, and also assists with research and genealogy inquiries.

Juliana graduated from Dickinson College in 2022 with a B.A. in English and Medieval Studies, and she plans to earn a Master's of Library Science in the future. While working toward her undergraduate degree, she worked as an archives assistant for Dickinson's Archives and Special Collections. In her free time, Juliana enjoys cooking, reading sci-fi and short stories, and catching up on TV shows with her partner.



Henkel Family Papers

*by Juliana Rhinehart,
Processing Archivist*

During February 2023, I processed a small collection of papers related to the Henkel/Henckel family, a prominent Lutheran family who moved from Germany to Pennsylvania in the early 1700s. Rev. Anthony Jacob Henckel was the first member of this family to immigrate to Pennsylvania in 1717. He was a notable Lutheran pastor in both Germany and Pennsylvania, where he helped found several Lutheran churches (including St. Michael's Lutheran Church in Germantown, whose records are also held by the Lutheran Archives and will soon be processed).

The Henkel collection I processed contains records mostly from the Rev. Paul Henkel, who was Anthony's great-grandson; his immediate family; and their printing company. Paul Henkel was born in Rowan County, North Carolina, in 1754 and married Elizabeth Negley in 1776. In 1782, the Henkels moved to New Market, Virginia, where in 1806 they founded a printing press. Producing a range of German-language religious and educational materials, the Henkel press helped German-speaking communities throughout the Shenandoah Valley preserve their language. The business was primarily run by Ambrose and Solomon Henkel, sons of Paul and Elizabeth. Paul contributed manuscripts and translated various theological works and hymnals, most notably editions of the Augsburg Confession, Luther's catechism, as well as various hymns.



Discovery of the Henkel grammar book subscription list has caused quite a stir among scholars. Here, Lisa Minardi and Sheila Joy show the manuscript to Lynne Farrington and John Pollack from the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts at the University of Pennsylvania.

The Henkel collection was in total disarray when I began, so I had to start from scratch in terms of processing. I began by creating a basic inventory and putting items into folders and boxes, which helped me realize the collection contains unique records that shed a great deal of light on the Henkel printing company. Ultimately, I grouped items into topical series and created a finding aid with detailed information about the Henkel family and this collection. Notable items from the collection include a six-foot long list of subscribers for a German-English grammar book, including subscribers' hometowns and how many copies of the book they paid for, dated 1812; handwritten manuscripts for a hymnal edited by Paul Henkel; manuscripts and translations of Luther's theological works; a small, tinned sheet iron box that originally held sermon notes; and correspondence between family members.

Working with collections like this one is extremely rewarding. Taking a collection of "miscellaneous family papers" and organizing it into folders, boxes, and series makes the collection much more accessible for researchers. Posting our finding aids online lets people do some initial research on their own to see what kind of records we have and if they

UNIVERSITY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BY
DAVID HENKEL.

THIS work contains a system of German and English grammar, comprising all the rules necessary, for the first entrance of a student into this useful study. Each grammar is exhibited in its own tongue, with an introductory discourse on the German letters and parts of speech in English, and a comprehensive vocabulary of German words translated particularly for those who are as yet unacquainted with that language; hence a person who is educated in one of these languages, may easily become acquainted with the propriety of both.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

"A GERMAN AND ENGLISH GRAMMAR." in manuscript, entitled: "A GERMAN AND ENGLISH GRAMMAR." I am of opinion that it may prove useful to those, who desire to become acquainted with the propriety both of the English and German languages, and have a tendency to create a taste for literature, as yet too much neglected in this part of the United States. I hope this laudable attempt of the author, a youth who laboured under many disadvantages, may receive from a generous public the encouragement it deserves.

G. W. SNYDER,
Minister of the gospel.

WOODSTOCK ACADEMY,
July the 9th, 1812.

AT the request of DAVID HENKEL, I have examined, though from the want of time rather superficially, an English Grammar compiled by him, which in my opinion possesses considerable merit. This work I think the more extraordinary, as being the production of a mere youth, and one who has had every slender opportunity of acquiring an education. There are few men, with every possible advantage, who have acquired a more accurate grammatical knowledge; and from his general acquaintance with grammar, I have no doubt, but that his German grammar, connected with the English possesses merit likewise, although from my not understanding that language, I am incompetent to form a judgment.

There unquestionably, is a great necessity for a German grammar: as I am informed there is no one of the kind extant in this country. Mr. HENKEL deserves the more credit, as he has formed his German grammar, de novo, without the assistance of any one before him in that language.

It is highly proper, that a youth of such promising talents, and of almost unexampled industry and application should be patronized and encouraged by the friends of the science generally.

WM. HILL,
Minister of the gospel.

WINCHESTER,
July the 15th, 1812.

CONDITIONS.

1. This work shall be printed on good paper, with an elegant new type, and handsomely bound.
2. It will be comprised in 180 or 200 octavo pages.
3. The price to subscribers will be one dollar, to be paid at the delivery of the books.
4. Persons who procure twelve subscribers, and become responsible for the pay, shall receive a thirteenth copy gratis.
5. This work shall be put to press as soon as a sufficient number of subscribers are procured, to defray the expenses of the publication.

(*For all persons holding subscriptions for the above work, are requested to transmit the number of subscribers, on or before the first of November next, to the editors. All communications must be post paid.*)

NEW-MARKET, Shenandoah County, Virg. July, the 22d, 1812

David Henkel.

Dieses Werk enthält ein System oder Lehrgebäude der Deutschen und Englischen Sprachlehre, welches alle die Regeln in sich begriffet, die notwendig sind beyder Sprachen erlernlich zu lernen. Jede Sprachlehre ist in ihrer eignen Sprache vertheilt, nebst einer vorhergehenden Abhandlung über die Deutschen Buchstaben und Theilen derselben Sprache in Englisch, besonders für diejenigen welche das Deutsch noch nicht lesen können. Es enthält auch eine Sammlung von Deutschen Wörtern, welche in das Englische übersezt sind. Also kann eine Person, welche nur in einer von diesen Sprachen unterrichtet ist, leicht einen Begriff von beyden bekommen.

A n e m p f e h l u n g e n.

Ich habe ein Werk von David Henkel in Manuscript durchgesehen, betitelt: "Eine Deutsche und Englische Sprachlehre." Ich bin der Meinung daß es nicht allein sehr nutz, für diejenige welche leuchten mit der Unwissenheit, sondern den Englischen und Deutschen Sprachen bekant zu werden, und eine Hülffung haben einen Versuch zu machen, welches bis jetzt in sich in diesem Theil der Vereinigten Staaten vernachlässigt worden ist. Ich hoffe daß diese lobliche Unternehmung des Autors, ein Jüngling, der unter vielen Schwierigkeiten arbeitete, eine Unterstützung welche es verdient, von einem freygebigen Publico erhalten möge.

G. B. Schreyber,
Prediger des Evangelii.

Woodstock Akademie,
den 9ten July, 1812.

Auf das Ansuchen von David Henkel, habe ich eine Englische Grammatik von ihm präsumptiv durchgesehen, welche nach meiner Meinung beträchtlichen Nutzen bringt. Ich erachte dieses Werk mehr ansehnlicher, weil es das Werk eines Jünglings ist, und einer der sehr wenige Vorleser sein kann, einen Unterricht zu erhalten. Es gibt wenige Leute, mit jedem möglichen Vortheile, welche eine genauere grammatische Kenntniß erlangen haben; und wegen seiner allgemeinen Bekanntschaft mit der Sprachlehre, habe ich keinen Zweifel, daß nicht seine Deutsche Grammatik, verbunden mit der Englischen das Derselbe bringe, welches sonst ich bey dem Englischen nicht verhoffe, so daß ich unbedinglich zu urtheilen.

Es ist untrüglich, eine große Nothwendigkeit für eine Deutsche Grammatik, indem ich bedauere, daß keine von dieser Art in diesem Lande vorhanden sind. Hr. Henkel verdient desto mehr Lob, weil er seine Deutsche Grammatik von neuem formirt, ohne die Hülff von einem andern vor ihm in derselben Sprache.

Es ist höchst richtig, daß ein Jüngling von solchen verwichenen Talenten und Bekanntschaft mit der Englischen und Deutschen Sprache, die Aufmerksamkeit der Wissenschafften allgemein, sollte begünstigt und unterstützt werden.

WM. Hill,
Prediger des Evangelii.

Winchester,
den 15ten July, 1812.

Bedingungen.

1. Dieses Werk soll auf gutes Papier mit neuen Buchstaben gedruckt und schön eingebunden werden.
2. Es soll ungefähr 180 oder 200 octavo Seiten enthalten.
3. Der Preis für Subscribenten ist ein Dollar, welcher bey der Ablieferung des Buches bezahlt wird.
4. Wer 12 Subscribenten sammelt, und selbst gut für die Bezahlung, soll ein 13tes Exemplar umsonst erhalten.
5. Dieses Werk soll gedruckt werden, sobald sich eine hinlängliche Anzahl Subscribenten einfinden, die Anstalten der Auflage zu bestreiten.

(*Personen welche Subscribenten sammeln, werden die Anzahl derselben einzufordern, an oder vor dem nächsten November an die Herausgeber. Derselbe, müssen postfrei eingehendet werden.*)

New-Market, Shenandoah County, Virginia, den 22ten July, 1812.

Subscriber's names.	Number of copies	Place of abode.	Namen der Subscribenten.	Anzahl der Exemplaren.	Wohnort.
Jacob Eckert	1	Rockingham County, Va.			
Philip Thoma	1	Do.			
George Maury	1	Shenandoah County			
Nicolaus Dinkeldain	1	Do.			
Jacob Adam	1	Newmarket, Va.			
William Griffin	1	Brownsville, Va.			
Henry Curran	1	Rockingham Va.			
George Torkel	1	Do.			
Adam Shirley	1	Do.			
Jacob Spitzer	1	Do.			
Henry Weber	1	Do.			
Simon Graves	1	Madison Va.			
Nicolaus Razy	1	Shenandoah County.			
Joh. A. Schumfeld	1	Rockingham Va.			
Henry Keller	1	Do.			
Joh. Troy	1	Newmarket, Va.			
John Hays	1	Shenandoah County, Va.			
Thomas Robinson	1	Do.			
Benjamin Thomson	1	Rockingham County, Va.			
George Vorse	1	Do.			
John Sheriff	1	Do.			
John Ruppert	1	Shenandoah County, Va.			
John Grant	1	Do.			
David Smith	1	Newmarket, Va.			
Daniel Bullhast	1	Rockingham County, Va.			
Adam Row	1	Shenandoah County, Va.			
Isaac Statten	1	Do.			
Benjamin Lawson	1	Augusta County, Va.			
Wm. A. Sull	1	Albemarle County, Va.			

Detail of the upper section of the German-English grammar book subscription list from 1812 found in the Henkel papers.

Augustana Book Cataloging Project

by Amanda Creek, Cataloger



In addition to the Henkel papers, this glass pitcher and bowl are said to have been used by Rev. Anthony Henkel. The Lutheran Archives preserves many such objects in addition to books and documents. Photo by Gavin Ashworth



This early photograph of portraits of Rev. Paul Henkel (1754–1825) and his wife Elizabeth was also found in the Henkel papers.

would be useful, and neatly organized records are much easier to look through during research appointments. Detailed processing also allows us at the Lutheran Archives Center to create a more in-depth inventory of what we possess, which in turn allows us to answer research requests more quickly and efficiently.

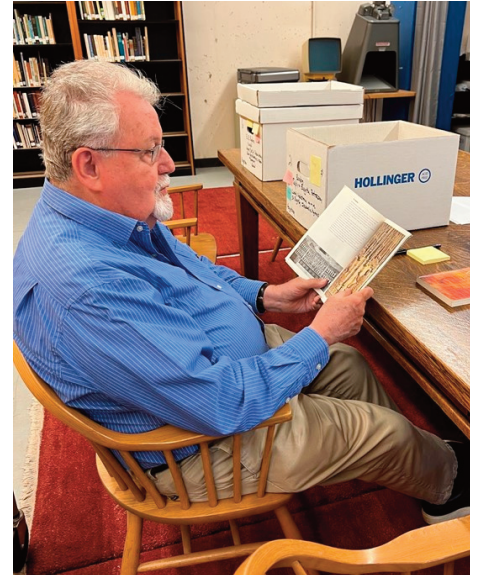
My next processing project will be the records of St. Michael's Germantown, which archives volunteer Linda Beck has already sorted through and begun to organize. From Linda's work, I know there are more materials regarding the Henkel/Henckel family in this collection, and I'm excited to make connections between the two sets of records and come up with a more comprehensive image of this family and their history! I'm also looking forward to adding all of these records to our online database and further expanding access for researchers.

Last fall, I began working at the Lutheran Archives to catalog a backlog of books from the Augustana Institute. When I began, these books were packed into 65 banker's boxes in our vault, which take up nearly 22 shelves. The goals for this project are to catalog the books so they can be entered into our online database, enabling researchers to find them, and to physically move the books from the vault and into our research library. This will free up precious storage space in the vault, which provides secure, climate-controlled storage for archival collections.

The Augustana Institute books were quite a change from my previous work cataloging books at Historic Trappe. Many are in the Swedish language, and as part of this project I needed to be able to identify whether or not each book fits the scope of what we will keep in the collection.

To help me quickly translate some of the contents and get a sense of the topic, I used Google Lens. This app works by taking a picture on my phone and allowing Google to translate the text in the image. It has been a useful tool and has made the process much easier.

As work progressed, our archivist Sheila Joy and I developed a better workflow to move through these books as we looked at the subject and topic I gathered from each one and then had Rev. Dr. Kim-Eric Williams provide us with further insight. His knowledge helped us understand each book's importance to the Augustana Institute collection, or when it was appropriate to remove a book from the collection as not relevant. He also offered anecdotes and interesting historical information we could never get from using Google Lens.



Kim-Eric Williams going through Augustana-related books to help identify keepers versus discards.

We meet monthly with him to go through a batch of books that I later separate and document for our internal records. I add these books to our collection spreadsheet. I often have to create a call number, as these books cannot be found in local libraries where I can copy an existing call number. We have separated the library books from archival material, and I've consolidated 65 banker's boxes down to 55 thus far.

Once the books are completely entered into this spreadsheet, we will upload them into our PastPerfect database for public browsing. When everything is complete with the book cataloging, we will move into archival processing. I recently learned through my family tree that I have a Swedish ancestor, making this project fun and exciting for me.

Editor's Note: this project is now being continued by Nicole Hudson, who recently began working for LACAP. Amanda Creek will continue to help with our website and social media.

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at Philadelphia**

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at Philadelphia

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AT PHILADELPHIA

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

It was the Spanish-American philosopher and novelist George Santayana (1863–1952) who said, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” In the archives we deal largely with the past. The heart of our collection consists of parish registers and records from closed congregations and Lutheran ministries from the northeastern United States, as well as the archives of our Lutheran forebearers such as Henry Melchior Muhlenberg and the Ministerium of Pennsylvania. At the Archives Center, we preserve the past not simply to ensure that we do not repeat it; we also preserve the past to help us understand the present and to help us to look to the future. Within the materials at the Archives Center, we can learn much from the past. We can discover where we have come from and uncover what worked and what did not work in terms of parish outreach and ministry.

Just so, we remember two recently deceased Lutheran Archives Center board members: former Slovak-Zion Synod Archivist, the Rev. John Philip (Phil) Kline (who died on December 26, 2022), and Augustana Institute Affiliated Member, Roy Johnson (who died on April 4, 2023). Phil and Roy both loved history, and their support of the Lutheran Archives Center helped to further our common work of remembering and preserving our past. “Rest eternal grant them O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them.”

J. Francis Watson
President of the Board