



LUTHERAN HISTORICAL CONFERENCE

NEWSLETTER

FRED WEISER 1935-2009

Rev. Frederick Sheely Weiser, 73, died January 26, 2009, at York Hospital. He was born November 25, 1935, in Hanover, the son of the late Donald Koehler and Elizabeth Katharyn Sheely Weiser. Rev. Weiser was a member of Christ Lutheran Church in York. He was a 1957 graduate of Gettysburg College with a major in history. He earned his Bachelor of Divinity from the Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary in 1960 and following graduation from the Seminary, he was ordained in the Central Pennsylvania Synod. Rev. Weiser later studied at the Philadelphia Seminary, receiving an S.T.M.



During the school year of 1959-60 he was a lecturer at Gettysburg College and for the following four years he was the Assistant Pastor at Grace Lutheran Church in Lancaster. During 1964-65 he served Diakonisches Jahr Evangelical Lutheran Church in Diakonissen Anstalt, Germany. Rev. Weiser returned home to become Chaplain at the Lutheran Home in Germantown. From 1966 to 1971 he served as archivist for the Gettysburg Lutheran Seminary. In 1971 Rev. Weiser was named pastor at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Biglerville, a post in which he served 19 years.

Rev. Weiser authored several books: *Serving Love - Chapters in the History of the Diaconate in American Lutheranism*, *Love's Response - A Story of Lutheran Deaconesses in America*, *The Weiser Family*, and *Fraktur*, a book of German Folk Art.

After leaving St. Paul in Biglerville, Fred worked in several successful interim arrangements with congregations including Grace Lutheran in Dallastown, Friedensaal and Zeigler's in Southern York County, St. John's in Berrysburg, and St. Christopher in Lykens, Dauphin County. Rev. Weiser was extremely skilled in conducting tours to Germany, which he arranged for participants, especially after the wall came down in October 1989. He was well known by the shopkeepers in the places he visited with tour groups and all of them expected him to return.

Rev. Weiser is survived by a sister, Harriett Russell of South Carolina, and a nephew, Mark.

Volume 47, No. 1
February 2009

ISSN 0460-0274
<http://luthhist.org>

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MERCIA BRENNE BACHMANN 1913-2009

Mercia Brenne Bachmann died peacefully in Townshend, Vt., on Feb. 2. She was 96. Born on a wheat farm in Saskatchewan on Jan. 2, 1913, Mercia was the second of five daughters of a circuit riding Lutheran pastor. She grew up in the Midwest in a variety of parsonages, attended St. Olaf College and the University of Minnesota and became a social worker since her father counseled her that the time was not ripe for female ministers.

In 1941 she married E. Theodore Bachmann, then a budding young church historian from distant Philadelphia, and was his life's companion, soulmate, critic and editor for 54 event-filled years in Wilmington, Chicago, post-war West Germany, St. Paul, Berkeley, Brazil, Switzerland and Princeton as he served in a wide variety of positions within the Lutheran church. They marched in Selma with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Ardent travelers, they visited some 50 countries

and together wrote "Lutheran Churches in the World." When Dr. Bachmann died in 1995, Mercia spent the next two years finishing his final book, *The United Lutheran Church in America, 1918-1962*.

After Princeton Seminary and the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia received their extensive library, Mercia sold the house in Princeton Junction and retired to nearby Meadow Lakes in Hightstown, where she enjoyed eight years. In November of 2007, Mercia moved to Townshend, Vt., where she could be close to her daughter. Mercia is survived by her son, F. Brenne, of Vimmerby,



Mercia Brenne and E. Theodore Bachmann in 1989 with the release of their volume *Lutheran Churches in the World: A Handbook*.

Sweden, and daughter, Mary, of Putney, Vt., plus their spouses, Catharina and Christopher, and two granddaughters, Eva and Anna. She is also survived by two sisters, Carola Boe of Amery, Wis., and Audrey Peterson of Mesa, Ariz.

NEW MEMBERS

New members who have joined since our last issue are:

Philip M. Teigen
10500 Drumm Ave.
Kensington, MD 20895

Dr Teigen is a retired historian whose focus was on the history of science and medicine, primarily the history of zoonotic diseases (rabies and anthrax in particular). He holds a Ph.D. in the History of Science from the University of Wisconsin, and is

a collector of Lutheran postcards interested in becoming more familiar with the Lutheran institutions depicted on his postcards.

The Rev. Dr. J. Francis Watson
530 Laurelwood Ct
Howell NJ 07731

Rev. Watson is the archivist for the New Jersey Synod ELCA and vice president of the board for the Lutheran Archives Center at Philadelphia.

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