

Report of the Region 6 Archives Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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Who tells the story of Lutherans in Region 6? How do we preserve it? The individuals, congregations, and synods of Region 6 tell their stories through written manuscripts, audio recordings, photographs, council and committee minutes, newsletters, bulletins, video recordings, oral history interviews, letters, artifacts, and much more. This year the Archives received closed congregation records, synod records, and congregational histories. The arrival of a memory box from Detroit's Calvary Lutheran Center offered a fascinating glimpse into the world of Calvary Lutheran Church in 1912 and 1951. Another surprise arrival was the records of the defunct Wittenburg Lutheran Church of DeKalb County, Indiana, from the DeKalb County Genealogy Society. These records from the 1840s-1930s are vital in telling both Wittenburg Lutheran Church's story and the story of Lutherans in Indiana.

Architecture portrays another part of the Lutheran story in Region 6. The Archives has an ongoing "Photographs of ELCA Churches" project. If your congregation would like to donate photographs of your church building, please contact Jennifer Long at (614) 235-4136, ext. 4606 or reg6archives@trinitylutheranseminary.edu. Thank you to all of the congregations who have already sent photographs. Thank you also to John Kleberg, who continues to donate his time and expertise in photographing Lutheran churches in Ohio for this project.

The Archives also offers services to congregations that want to record their own part of the Lutheran story. This year marked the third annual congregational anniversary research and history-writing assistance campaign, in which the Archives offers guides about celebrating congregational anniversaries and compiling congregational histories. The Archives also provides research assistance to congregations seeking more information about their past. In addition, the Archives offers guidance for congregations who wish to organize their records or establish their own congregational archives.

Not only does the Archives help congregations, but also individuals. The Archives received over 100 inquiries this year. Inquiries included requests for membership records from disbanded congregations, genealogy requests, and information about specific aspects of Lutheran history in Region 6. Requests came from congregation members, scholars, and genealogists.

This year the Archives continued its participation in Trinity Lutheran Seminary's Summer Seminary Sampler, in which the archivist mentored two students. Activities included: a discussion of archival issues and the place of archives in the ELCA, a tour of Region 6 Archives, a virtual tour of Churchwide & Regional ELCA Archives via Web sites, and a "Treasure Hunt"/Mock Inquiry in which students utilized Archive and Trinity's Hama Library resources to find out about a historical Lutheran figure. Students also engaged in self-initiated historical explorations, including finding their church's congregational history or tracing where their church fit within the history of the ELCA's predecessor bodies.

Finally, the Archives web site is undergoing an update. For more information about the Archives, visit the Archives web site at <http://www.trinitylutheranseminary.edu/elca/>.

The Archives experienced many exciting projects and events this year, all dedicated to preserving our church's history. Thank you to the many individuals, congregations, and synods that have contributed their efforts to this purpose in 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

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