



REFORMATION NOTES

News for Partners of the Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection
Spring 1998, Number 12

In time for the millennium—the 2,000th Kessler title —M. Patrick Graham

On August 31, 1997, there were 1,927 individual publications and manuscripts in the Kessler Reformation Collection, and it was hoped that the 2,000th piece could be added by August 1998. As fortune would have it, the 2,000th title was added to the collection before the end of 1997; and as we enter spring 1998, the number has climbed to 2,054. Three extraordinary opportunities arose in the form of especially rich catalogs from German and Dutch antiquarian dealers, and rare-book auctions continue to provide the collection with a wealth of materials from which to choose. The current year's acquisitions include more than twenty-five works by Martin Luther, as well as several publications each by Melancthon, Erasmus, and Eck.

Two other developments are important for a proper appreciation of the collection's growth this year. First, the rest of the Special Collections of the Pitts Theology Library also has continued to expand rapidly and surpassed the 90,000th-volume mark in fall 1997, thus providing additional resources to support the study of Reformation and post-Reformation theology and church history. In addition, the library was able to take advantage of an opportunity to purchase a substantial collection of German pietist works from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

The aim of all these collection-development efforts, of course, is to promote the study and appreciation of Luther, the Protestant Reformation, and theology by students, researchers, and the broader public. Other articles in this issue of *Reformation Notes* indicate some of the progress toward this goal.

The Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection is a repository of rare and valuable documents produced in connection with the Protestant Reformation. The collection now contains more than 2,000 pieces written by Martin Luther, his colleagues, and opponents and printed during their lifetimes.

Supported by the vision and resources of Lutheran laypeople Richard and Martha Kessler and partners throughout the Southeast, the collection is housed in the Pitts Theology Library of Candler School of Theology. It provides a rich resource for scholars of the Reformation and for clergy and laity who seek to understand the history of the Christian faith.

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Kessler Collection update

M. Patrick Graham

In addition to the increase in the size of the Kessler Reformation Collection this year, related programs have made substantial progress. The first decade of the collection's history, as well as the 500th anniversary of the birth of Philip Melanchthon, was marked on October 28, 1997, by the *Soli Deo Gloria* concert, Reformation lecture, and rare-book exhibition. In addition, fall 1997 witnessed the publication of an important resource for the study of Melanchthon and the Reformation, *Philip Melanchthon (1497–1560) and the Commentary* (Sheffield Academic Press). Included in this book is an extensive analysis by Pitts Rare Book Librarian Dr. Daniel J. Rettberg of 156 pieces from the Kessler Collection that were written in whole or part by Melanchthon. This group of

nine essays should not only promote Melanchthon research but also alert scholars to the resources available in the Kessler Reformation Collection at Pitts.

The manuscript holdings of the collection also have attracted scholarly attention, and preparations have been made to issue critical editions of two letters by Luther's contemporaries. The first was written in 1544 by Caspar Cruciger Sr. (1504–1548) to Veit Dietrich (1506–1549) in Nuremberg, and it deals with matters related to Luther, Melanchthon, and other well-known reformers of the day. The second letter—written three years later—was sent to Julius Pflug (1499–1564) by a vigorous Catholic opponent of Luther, Johannes Cochlaeus (1479–1552), who was about to be named Bishop of Naumburg. The critical edition and

notes for the Cruciger letter have been prepared by Professor Timothy Wengert (Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia), and those for the Cochlaeus letter by Professor Ralph Keen (University of Iowa).

Finally, it should be noted that the Reformation Collection continues to be the center of attention for academics and laypersons who visit the Pitts Theology Library. Pieces from the collection are used both for general presentations about the history of theological research and the history of the book and for specialized presentations about Lutheran hymnody and sixteenth-century theology.

M. Patrick Graham is Librarian and Margaret A. Pitts Associate Professor of Theological Bibliography.

Lutheran hymns and liturgies

Timothy E. Albrecht

What a profound debt of gratitude I owe to Candler's musical treasures found in the Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection. For more than a decade, several of these early Lutheran hymnals and liturgies have given joy and nourishment to me on three fronts: as pedagogical tools, as inspiration for our fall Reformation concerts, and as personal spiritual aids.

Starting with the last category first, the combination of such theological and musical bedrock continues to provide spiritual nourishment in my own faith pilgrimage. To give but one example, my Christian faith has been strengthened by praying Luther's ten-stanza "Nun freut euch, lieben Christen g'mein," a splendid example of a sung form of the Law and Gospel theme so much a part of my own German Lutheran heritage.

In my teaching, an important annual event for every generation

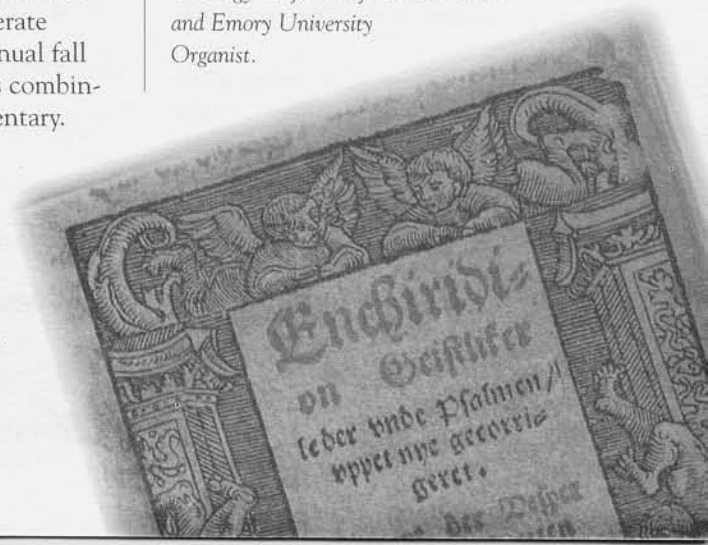
of our Master of Sacred Music organ students is the visit to the Kessler Reformation holdings in the Pitts Theology Library. *Die Deutsche Messe* (1526), one of the first vernacular Protestant settings of a Sunday morning worship service, is appreciated by our students at a much deeper level when they hold in their hands not a modern edition or facsimile but a copy printed in 1526 and used by first-generation Lutherans in Germany.

Finally, the awe and respect that these musical landmarks generate inspire the content of our annual fall Reformation concerts, events combining music and spoken commentary. Would internationally renowned musicologists such as Harvard University's Christoph Wolff or Robert Marshall of Brandeis have visited our campus so readily were it not for being allowed contact with primary-source material

such as the invaluable 1524 *Etlich Christlich Lider*?

The rich dividends that we all reap from our interaction with these "living legends" (be they scholars and musicians of our time or vital sixteenth-century documents once again alive before us) provide the quality of experiences that make Emory the center for learning and inspiration that it is.

Timothy E. Albrecht is Candler School of Theology Professor of Church Music and Emory University Organist.



Reformation music

Stephen Crist

One of the great pleasures of teaching at Emory during the past eight years has been the opportunity to introduce groups of students to the musical items in the Kessler Reformation Collection. I have used these materials in several different courses, for graduate students and undergraduate music majors as well as for general students with a more limited background in music. Whenever I teach courses involving the music of Johann Sebastian Bach—such as the survey of baroque music offered last year, the graduate seminar on the Bach cantatas that is scheduled for next fall, or the yearly survey of choral music—I begin by sketching the liturgical and musical contributions of Martin Luther and his associates in the sixteenth century.

Although Bach's church music was penned some 200 years later, his famous vocal works and organ pieces incorporate texts and melodies that originated in the early years of the Lutheran Reformation—the period documented so splendidly by the Kessler Collection. Knowledge of the origins of Lutheran hymnody is crucial too for understanding the contributions of major seventeenth-century composers such as Michael Praetorius, whose harmonization of the Advent hymn "Lo, how a

Rose e'er blooming" still appears in most hymnals today.

The pedagogical value of the Kessler Reformation Collection is incalculable. Just as an excellent live performance of a work surpasses even the finest recording, examining primary documents from the period generates a level of enthusiasm and interest for which there is no substitute. Invariably, the students feel a sense of awe in the presence of such rare and precious materials, and that awe is an impetus for further study. The significance of a concept such as *sola scriptura* acquires much greater depth when students see not only the musical notation and poetry of Luther's earliest hymns in the *Achtliederbuch*, but also the extensive list of biblical references that accompanies them.

When I tell my colleagues at other colleges and universities how I incorporate the materials of the Kessler Reformation Collection into my teaching, they generally are both amazed and envious. I consider this to be a unique opportunity and privilege, and am grateful for the vision and commitment of those whose generosity makes it possible.

Dr. Stephen A. Crist is Associate Professor of Music History in Emory College.

Reformation Studies

Jonathan Strom

As one of the finest resources of its kind in North America, the Kessler Collection offers scholars in Reformation studies an unusually rich trove of books and materials. Naturally, one of the true pleasures of coming to the Candler faculty this year has been the ability to work closely with these materials in my own scholarship. The Kessler Collection also has been a

tremendous addition to seminary classes on the Reformation era in general and Luther in particular.

For instance, when studying Luther's 1526 *Deutsche Messe* and its impact, we are able to talk not only about the contents of the work, but also examine in Special Collections how Luther's liturgical revision appeared in print to his contemporaries. The strong collection of early Reformation Bibles allows students to experience the heft



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and grandeur of these volumes, as well as analyze the woodcut illustrations that are texts in and of themselves.

In a very concrete way, visits to the library's Kessler Collection enable students to connect with the Reformation era. Beyond that, encounters with the Kessler Collection serve a broader purpose: While most students are aware of the Kessler Collection, few realize that these materials are available for use in their own studies and research papers. Visits to the Kessler Collection encourage students to incorporate these materials into their broader theological education.

In future courses, I plan to use the Kessler materials more extensively. One barrier, of course, is the special handling and care that these materials require. Consequently, one project that I am currently planning for the next academic year will be to identify and digitize images from the Kessler Collection that may then be used directly in the classroom in multimedia presentations and published on the web. This will make these images more accessible not only to Candler students but to the broader university and academic community as well.

Dr. Jonathan Strom is Assistant Professor of Church History in Candler School of Theology.

Marginalia—Kessler in the classroom

Daniel J. Rettberg

On other pages of this issue of *Reformation Notes*, various faculty discuss the ways that the Kessler Reformation Collection has supported their research and teaching. About a year ago, the library staff formed an "Interpretation and Promotion Committee," the purpose of which was to make the collections and services of the Pitts Theology Library better known to its patrons. As a part of this outreach, the committee decided to develop a series of presentations that drew on the library's premiere collections and then invited individual faculty members to bring classes working in related areas to the library. Previously, such presentations had been offered mostly on a case-by-case basis, and usually at the faculty member's request.

It has been my pleasure to offer five of these presentations, four of which have drawn upon materials from the Kessler Collection. In each case, contact has been made with the individual faculty member for the purpose of selecting the books or manuscripts most relevant to the subject of the class and ascertaining the level of preparation the students would be bringing to the pre-

sentation. The purpose of the presentations has been to give the students the opportunity to see and handle exceptionally rare and important pieces and to suggest avenues for making them the subject of individual research projects.

Not surprisingly, most of the presentations of materials from the Kessler Collection have been done for classes in historical theology and sacred music. Of particular interest to the historians have been the three printings of Luther's Small Catechism, the copies of Luther's famous "Reformation treatises," and various editions or portions of the Bible in the Kessler Collection.

Of special interest to the musicologists have been the early hymnals and Luther's *Deutsche Messe*, a vernacular (German) service with a heavy emphasis on congregational singing, published by Luther in 1526. The presentations have covered both the contents of the pieces and their form, showing how a knowledge of printing history and the history of ownership of each piece can contribute to our understanding of the author and the times.

Dr. Daniel J. Rettberg is Rare Book Librarian at the Pitts Theology Library.



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