

The Impact of Luther's Postils and Exegetical Works on Reformation and Counter-Reformation Preaching

Seminar Leader: Austra Reinis

Reporter: Austra Reinis

Benjamin Mayes (Fort Wayne, Indiana) explored »Luther's Forgotten Sermons on Holy Baptism«. Most of Luther's focused, non-incidental writing on Baptism occurred in sermons or catechisms. Alongside the 1534 baptismal sermon series that appeared in 2016 in *Luther's Works, American Edition* 57:139–189, Luther's other baptismal sermon series (from 1528, 1531, 1532, 1538, and 1539, after Epiphany) illustrate his teaching on Baptism in more detail than what is found in the catechisms. Johannes Aurifaber's editing of the 1538 and 1539 sermon series for the unpublished third volume of the Eisleben edition of Luther's writings is reliable and trustworthy.

Henning Jürgens (Mainz) reported on an ongoing research project on »Lutheran Peace Sermons in the 17th Century«. Beginning with the end of the Thirty Years' War, Lutheran *Friedenspredigten*, or peace sermons, established themselves as a particular genre of Lutheran preaching in the Holy Roman Empire. These sermons were held on

the occasion of peace festivals celebrated in many places, some spontaneously, others on command of the authorities. In many cases, the rulers issued detailed orders on how to celebrate the services and prescribed prayers or announcements. In laying out the suggested pericopes, the preachers interpreted war and peace as signs of God's wrath and grace, reminded their parishioners of the hardships of war and called to repentance. The example of a peace sermon held 1650 in Delitzsch near Leipzig by Jacob Clauder shows how Lutheran preachers interpreted the obligations of the three estates during and after the war and highlighted the role of forgetting what had happened as a prerequisite for future understanding among the conflict partners. Hundreds of printed peace sermons from the mid-seventeenth to the end of the eighteenth century have survived and will be investigated in an ongoing research project.

Robert Kolb (Saint Louis, Missouri) spoke on Wittenberg postil sermons, offering a comparative approach. One of Luther's most in-

fluent works, his postil in the several forms it took, helped shape the preaching of his followers and also generated some thirty imitations composed by members of the Wittenberg school. A comparison of one Wittenberg-school sermon for the first Sunday of Advent in one of these postils, by Simon Musaeus (1529–1581), with Luther's sermon for that Sunday in his *House Postil* of 1544, reveals that Musaeus' understanding of the biblical message follows closely in Luther's train except that he composed the sermon in a quite different fashion from that of Luther. His own pattern began by making clear how his treatment of the text for the Sunday reflected and conveyed the content of some part of the catechism. He concluded with a »summary« in the form of a prayer. His content always delivered both law and gospel, presented explanations of linguistic and historical details in the text, and elaborated on its significance for the faith and life of hearers and readers.

Erik Herrmann (Saint Louis, Missouri) introduced his current work on the topic, »Preaching the End of the Law and the Coming of Faith: Sixteenth-Century Interpretations and Applications of Galatians 3«. While it is well-known that Martin Luther moved away

from the salvation-history approach to the concepts of »law« and »gospel«, which tends to equate the former with the Old Testament and the latter with the New, much remains to be learned about the appropriation of Luther's interpretation of law and gospel by his contemporaries. Examination of the Latin sermons of the Catholic reformer, Jacob Schoepper (1478–1530), likely written for the education of priests, reveals that the author, a priest in Dortmund, appropriated Luther's interpretation of law and gospel. While Schoepper remained in solidarity with Rome, he sympathized with many of the concerns and ideas of Luther; his play, *Monomachia Davidis et Goliae* (1550), was placed on the *Index of Forbidden Books*.

Austra Reinis (Springfield, Missouri) presented the texts of two prayers of Princess Margarethe von Anhalt (1473–1530), ruler of the tiny principality of Anhalt-Dessau from her husband's death in 1516 until she died in 1530. While Margarethe hindered Lutheran preaching in her principality and supported monastic establishments, especially the Franciscan monasteries in Zerbst and Halle, her letters reveal that she avidly read both Luther's works and the works of his opponents. Written at a time in which confessional

boundaries were still fluid, her prayers encompass both Lutheran insights, for example, that salvation is certain, and expressions of loyalty to »one holy Christian and universal Church«.

Of the remaining seminar participants, *Mary Jane Haemig* (Saint Paul, Minnesota) and *Moyo Chirofadzwo* (Harare, Zimbabwe),

each reported on recent research by others on the sermons of Johannes Mathesius (1504–1565) in Joachimstal. *Atahualpa Hernandez Miranda* (Bogota, D.C., Colombia) shared observations about possible traces of Luther's ideas on the preaching of Antonio Montesino, Gil de San Nicolas and Pedro de Cordoba in South America.

Luther's Translation into Languages and Cultures of the 21st Century

Seminar Leader: Ricardo W. Rieth

Reporter: Ricardo W. Rieth

Different people and groups from religious, educational and cultural institutions around the world remain convinced that Luther's heritage is relevant to their life and helps them to face new challenges in the 21st century. However, five hundred years separate their time from the historical context of the reformer and his work, so that an effective approach is only possible with a consistent translation effort, given the wide differences in languages and cultures. Seminar participants presented papers reporting and analyzing experiences of translating

Luther and the Reformation into different languages and cultures to discuss aspects of a global or international perspective.

Sarah Hinlicky Wilson shared her experiences of teaching the »Studying Luther in Wittenberg« seminar over the course of eight years, from 2009 to 2016. This seminar was developed by the LWF and the EKD to foster international friendships among Lutheran clergy through intensive study of Luther's theological writings in his own city. The course lasts for two weeks and involves three hours daily in the