

The Newsletter of the Joseph A. Sittler Archives at LSTC  
Christmas, 2012

Greetings! Here is recent news about the Sittler Archives.

1. On October 2, friends of the Archive Bill and Char Maloney hosted a wonderful event at a conference center in Chicago to remember the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Joseph Sittler. About 70 people attended, most, though not all, from the greater Chicago area. Included were many former students and colleagues, as well as others who did not know Joe personally but have become admirers of his work. Rob Saler, former Sittler Fellow at LSTC and now on the staff of the Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, was the MC. The major portion of the morning was a 2-hour session of reminiscences. There was a panel of presentations by Martin Marty, John Buchanan (editor, *The Christian Century*), Carl McKenzie (former student of Joe's at Maywood), and Mel George (re the Sittler Archive), followed by an open mike session in which various attendees spoke about their particular memories of Joe and thoughts about his significance in today's world. This session was videotaped, and it will soon be available on the Sittler website at [www.josephsittler.org](http://www.josephsittler.org)

That was followed by a veritable feast of a lunch, which included Polish Sausage and sauerkraut, all made possible by the Maloneys. After lunch there was an open discussion of the future of the Archive, with many comments, suggestions, and questions. That segment was not videotaped but an audio recording will be available for the entire Sittler Archive Committee to consider as that group plans for the future of the Archive under the newly arrived President of LSTC.

Many thanks to Bill and Char for this marvelous and significant event!

2. We are pleased to announce the publication of [The Eloquence of Grace: Joseph Sittler and the Preaching Life](#) by James M. Childs, Jr., (retired Joseph A. Sittler Professor and Dean at Trinity Seminary) and Richard Lischer (Cleland Professor of Preaching at Duke University), with a Foreword by Martin Marty. This impressive volume contains many previously unpublished sermons given by Joe, (with brief commentaries) plus a number of his writings about the calling of the preacher.

In their introduction, the authors write: "This book celebrates Joseph Sittler's legacy as preacher, theologian of the Word, and teacher of the church." Published by Cascade Books, the volume can be ordered on-line at [https://wipfandstock.com/store/The Eloquence of Grace Joseph Sittler and the Preaching Life](https://wipfandstock.com/store/The_Eloquence_of_Grace_Joseph_Sittler_and_the_Preaching_Life)

3. In addition to a copy of "The Eloquence of Grace", the Archive has received a number of new items, including the earliest written piece of Sittler's we know of – his 1930 Senior Thesis at Hamma Divinity School, entitled "The Gothic World and its Architectural Expression." The Wittenberg University library found this substantial

typewritten document and copied it for us. Some other new acquisitions: CD's from Bill Maloney with Sittler, Morris Niedenthal and Wilhelm Linss discussing the texts for the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent from the mid-70's; "The Church in the Arts," discussed by Sittler and Sidney J. Harris; and Sittler's "Meditation on the Church" from 1974. Barbara Sittler gave a copy of a letter to Joe from Richard Niebuhr that she had received from Stewart Hermann. The Archive has also received a third box of Sittler-related material from the estate of Ruth Manz.

4. We are trying to increase the outreach of the Sittler Archives so as to share Joe's ideas more widely in the church and the world today. Two developments are especially noteworthy. First, on Sunday afternoon November 18, as part of the annual meeting (in Chicago) of the American Academy of Religion, there was an excellent panel session about the "Chicago School" of theology. Joe Sittler was prominently featured in this session, especially appropriate in this 25th anniversary year of Joe's death. The panel consisted of Martin Marty, Jim Childs (Trinity Seminary), Rob Saler, Finnish scholar Panu Pihkala, with Matt Frost (current Sittler Fellow) as moderator.

The second activity is scheduled for January, when "Let's Talk", the online theological journal of the Metro Chicago Synod of the ELCA, will devote its entire issue to Sittler. As now planned, the issue will contain two of Joe's sermons (from the Archive in his own handwriting!), plus articles about Joe's work as well as information about the Archive. The journal is available at [www.mcsletstalk.org/](http://www.mcsletstalk.org/)

5. The Sittler Archive's expenses are primarily the stipend for the LSTC student who serves as the Sittler Fellow and the cost of digitizing the many tapes in the collection to make their content more widely available. These expenses are covered by tax-deductible private gifts, for which we are most grateful. Checks may be sent to:

Jessica Houston, Office of Advancement,  
Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago,  
1100 E. 55<sup>th</sup> Street, Chicago, IL 60615

Checks should be made to LSTC, but PLEASE add a note that the gift is for the Sittler Archives. Thank you!

We are grateful for your interest, support, and encouragement. Christmas blessings, and may peace and joy abound in the new year to come.

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PS – If you no longer wish to receive these newsletters, please let us know.

