

What are the "traditional name-calendars" and what is their history in the Lutheran Church of Germany?

A quick look at Graff, *Geschichte der Auflösung* (I, 125-128), Rietschel-Graff, *Lehrbuch der Liturgik*, 172-175, and *Gottesdienst der Kirche 6,1* (207-210) shows that in the German Lutheran Church of the 16th and 17th centuries, saints' days were not celebrated in Church, except for the feasts of Apostles, Mary, and Christ, along with the Festival of the Reformation, All Saints, and in some places St. Martin, St. Nicolaus, and St. Laurence. These were all seen as feasts of Christ. Often a feast falling during the week would be transferred to the following Sunday.

Though not celebrated in Church, the memory of the Saints lived on in the Lutheran Church by means of private devotional literature. Calendars at the time of the Reformation and thereafter contained one or two Saints' names for every day of the year. Frieder Schulz ["Das Gedächtnis der Zeugen: Vorgeschichte, Gestaltung und Bedeutung des Evangelischen Namenkalenders," in: *Jahrbuch für Liturgik und Hymnologie*. 19 (1975) 69-104.] reports that devotional commentaries on the lives of the Saints were produced within Reformation circles by H. Bonnus (1539), G. Major (1544--with preface by Luther, see WA 54, 107ff.), G. Spalatin (1544--also with preface by Luther, WA 54, 112ff.), P. Eber (1550), J. Foxe (1554--reformation martyrs), C. Goltwurm (1559--traditional names plus 50 names of reformation martyrs), H. Pantaleon (1563), L. Rabus (1552-58), A. Hondorff/V. Sturm (1573), and M. Behm (1606). Schulz reports that the observation of Saints' Days within the Lutheran Church died out during the 1600's due to the rise of popular devotional literature.

However, Valerius Herberger (1562-1627, Lutheran pastor in Fraustadt, now in Poland) wrote a "Herzpostilla" on the lives of the Saints, and this devotional commentary was reprinted at least until 1754. Schulz also mentions that G. Major's commentary was translated into German and republished at least as late as 1700 in Halle. This indicates that while the production of new works on the lives of the Saints may have ceased in the 1600's, the old works continued to be read well into the 18th century.

Schulz reports that the calendar names themselves varied slightly for each of the Lutheran Landeskirchen (e.g. Bavaria, Saxony, Hesse), since the Lutherans simply took over the traditional Catholic diocesan calendars at the time of the reformation. Therefore it is not surprising that Wilhelm Loehe's calendars contained a number of Bavarian saints. Loehe's *Martyrologium* (1868) was to be a commentary on the "traditional calendar names," although the calendar in his *Martyrologium* is different or corrected in many ways when compared to the calendar contained in his *Haus-, Schul- und Kirchenbuch für Christen des lutherischen Bekenntnisses* (1859). Loehe's writing, "Von Benützung des Heiligenkalenders für das eigene Leben (1865)" (*Werke* 4, p. 425-428) indicates an ongoing process in correcting his calendar and making it suited for his Deaconess Houses. The 1859 calendar contained many more names than the 1868 calendar, normally at least two names per day. Major feasts were labelled with their Latin names. But the earlier calendar also had errors. Many dates were marked with a question mark. A comparison of the two calendars shows that in the earlier calendar, Loehe had mistaken Cyprian the Sorcerer (Sept. 26) with Cyprian of Carthage. On the old calendar's April 13th, Hermenegild was a princess. In the new one, he's a prince. In the earlier calendar, Hildegard the Abbess (Sept. 17) was dated in the 300's. In the new one, she is dated 1179. In fact, in the later calendar, I estimate that half of the dates have been changed. Loehe does not indicate his sources, but it is clear that along with a traditional Bavarian Lutheran calendar he made use of the Roman *Martyrologium*, and attempted to find the right Lutheran "viewpoint" (*Werke* 4, p. 427). Loehe was aware of contemporary efforts at calendar reform and was against attempts to include Reformed theologians such as Calvin and Zwingli in a calendar for Lutherans, though he did not rule out the theoretical possibility of such an inclusion at some point in the future (*Werke* 3,1, p. 557). Ferdinand Piper (1811-1889) collated all the available calendars from Evangelical Lands of the German language and developed a calendar for the Prussian Union-Church, while Theodor Fliedner (1800-64) developed a *Buch der Märtyrer und anderer Glaubenszeugen der evangelischen Kirche* for Kaiserswerth.

Though it's not available to me, Piper's work, [*Evangelischer Kalender* (Berlin, 1850-1870, annually)].



English translation: H. M. MacCracken, *Lives of the Leaders of our Church Universal...* (Boston, 1879)] read with a critical eye, may turn out to be a helpful work in crafting a modern Lutheran *Namenkalender* that rests on solid Lutheran tradition, since it appears that he already did the task of collating all the calendars available to him 150 years ago.

The best modern article on the history of Lutheran *Namenkalender* is Frieder Schulz, "Das Gedächtnis der Zeugen: Vorgeschichte, Gestaltung und Bedeutung des Evangelischen Namenkalenders," in: *Jahrbuch für Liturgik und Hymnologie*. 19 (1975) 69-104. More information can also be gained there on the modern *Namenkalender* for the Evangelical Landeskirchen in Germany. This calendar seems quite similar to the list of commemorations in *LBW*.

For general literature on the Lutheran observance of Saints' Days, see the references contained in Karl-Heinrich Bieritz, "Das Kirchenjahr," in: H. Schmidt-Lauber, ed., i.a. *Handbuch der Liturgik*. (Göttingen, Germany: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1995) 487-489; Philipp Harnoncourt, "Der Kalender," and Hansjörg Auf der Maur, "Feste und Gedenktage der Heiligen," in: Hans Bernhard Meyer, ed., i.a. *Gottesdienst der Kirche: Handbuch der Liturgiewissenschaft. Teil 6,1 Feiern im Rhythmus der Zeit II/1*. (Regensburg, Germany: Friedrich Pustet, 1994) 55-58, 205-211.

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