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Wengert's "Dictionary of Luther and the Lutheran traditions" (book review)

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Book Reviews



Wengert, T.J. (Ed.). (2017). *Dictionary of Luther and the Lutheran traditions*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic. 850 pp. \$59.99. ISBN 9780801049699

The year 2017 marked the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation therefore the market has seen an influx of reformation related materials. Adding to these new publications is Baker Academic's contribution in the form of the *Dictionary of Luther and the Lutheran traditions*. General Editor for this project was Timothy J. Wengert, professor emeritus at Lutheran Theological Seminary, Philadelphia. Using his expertise in Reformation history and that of over 80 contributing Lutheran Tradition and Church History scholars this resource includes close to six-hundred entries related to Luther and Lutheranism. The broad scope of entries engages topics such as historical geography, social and cultural ideologies, theological concepts, and denominational distinctions. Arguably the greatest contribution of this work is its wealth of biographical sketches. From S. Aaron, the first protestant Indian ordained pastor to Swiss reformer Ulrich Zwingli the detailed and well-researched biographies offer valuable insight into the personalities that helped form Lutheran tradition.

This work is formatted as a traditional dictionary with alphabetic entries. Each record includes cross-references and bibliographic citations allowing the reader opportunity for further study. In his lengthy introduction, Wengert provides an overview of the Reformation and speaks to how the entries fit within the history of the movement "focusing on Luther and including not simply well-known, influential names and movements from Germany and Scandinavia but also lesser-known but nonetheless crucial figures who founded and preserved a Lutheran witness to the gospel throughout the world" (xxiv).

Dictionary of Luther and the Lutheran traditions is a true academic work enclosed in a format that is accessible and easy for all users to comprehend and utilize. Both academic and personal libraries would benefit from the inclusion of this significant work.

Reviewer

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