

# Rare Books in the ALC Library

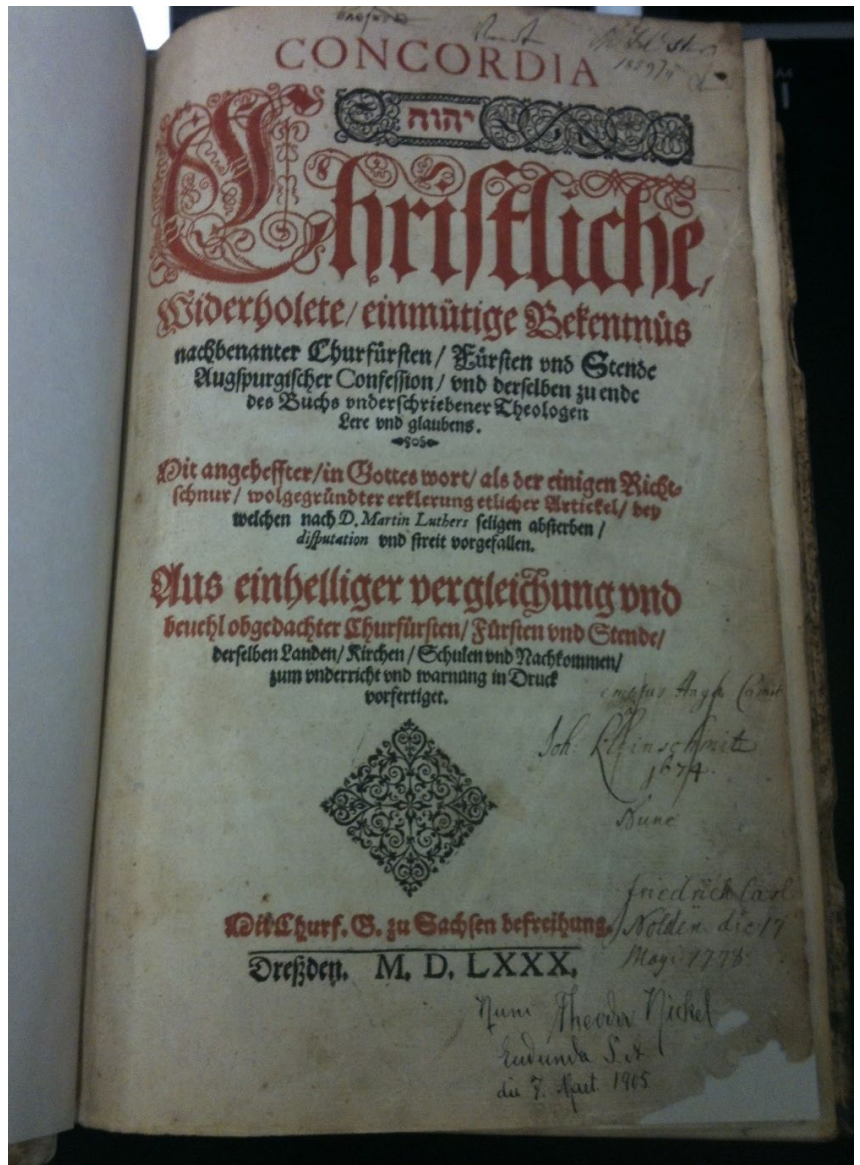
By Trevor Schaefer

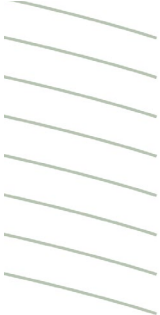
Serials & Lending Librarian, ALC Library

## Book of Concord

The first edition of the Book of Concord, published in Dresden in 1580. This book is the foundation document of the confessional Lutheran Church. Candidates for ordination in the LCA are required to study it carefully and be prepared to accept its contents as their own confession. The book contains documents that were formulated and argued about over a fifty-year period during the Reformation, as the 'Lutherans' sought to articulate their beliefs and their differences from the Roman Catholic Church.

After the Confessional documents, are 44 unnumbered pages of names of over 8,000 signatories of the Formula of Concord, pastors and schoolteachers [*Schuldiener*], divided according to the various principalities in Germany at the time. These names do not appear in modern editions of the Book of Concord. This book has been continuously in print in various editions in German and Latin first, and later in English and in many other languages, over the past 400 plus years.





This copy was brought to South Australia by the Oster family and signed by P. J. Oster, 1859. Other signatures include Joh. Kleinschmit, 1674, Friedrich Carl Nolden, 1778, and Theod. Nickel, Eudunda, 1905. It was presented to the library by the family of the late Pastor Otto Thiele in 1980. Copy 1 was presented by Rev. D. B. Muetzelfeldt in 1969, from the library of his father, Karl Muetzelfeldt, who had been a lecturer at Immanuel Seminary. The Colophon is a beautiful example of the printer's art, with an image and quotation from Psalm 9. The Colophon is dated 1579 (copy 2). The names of the printers are Matthes Stockel & Gimel Bergen.

### Reason and Answer as to Why Young Women can Leave the Cloister

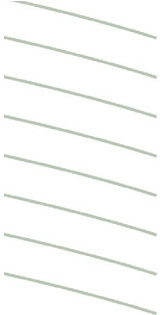
The oldest work of Luther in the Collection: *Reason and Answer as to why young women can leave the cloister*, was published in 1523. This example demonstrates Luther's stance against celibacy and monasticism. In the pamphlet, Luther sent out a straightforward message to nuns in their convents, many of whom he knew were growing critical of the practices of the Roman Catholic Church. He gave them confidence to leave, and many did, going on to marry, retreating into domestic obscurity. One ex-nun, Katherina von Bora, attracted to Luther's reforming ideas, went to Wittenberg, as did others, and met Luther. She and Luther married in 1525 and went on to have six children. She remained his stalwart supporter in his reformist activities, in particular managing the household's business affairs.

### Testamenta Marra: Jesuni Christuni npantjani jaura ninaia karitjimalkana wonti Dieri jaurani (New Testament)

This is a Biblical work of great significance. It is the first full New Testament translated into an Australian Aboriginal language. This achievement marks the continuation of Luther's commitment to providing all believers (or potential believers) with access to the Word of God in their own language. In the 1880s and early 1890s, German missionary pastors, Johannes Reuther and Carl Strehlow, began to study in depth the language, culture, stories and society of the Dieri people of Cooper's Creek where the Lutheran Church had established Bethesda mission in 1866, at Lake Kilallpaninna. Reuther spent considerable time translating the New Testament into the Dieri language, and with the assistance of Strehlow, prepared the manuscript for printing. Reuther's foreword in the Dieri language is dated 18 November 1895. It was then published in Tanunda, South Australia, by G. Auricht's Printing Office in 1897, an achievement in typesetting in itself. Reuther also translated hymns and prayers into the Dieri language. This is a first edition copy of an historically significant publication.

### Die Aranda- und Loritja-Stamme in Zentral-Australien, On the Aranda and Loritja tribes of Central Australia

by Carl Strehlow (1871-1922), published Frankfurt, 1907-1920, with a 7 volume translation by Rev Hans Oberscheidt, c1985-1991.



Strehlow was a missionary pastor at Hermannsburg Mission in Central Australia from 1894 until 1922, shortly before his death. He had already published the New Testament in the Dieri language at Bethesda Mission on Cooper's Creek with Pastor Reuther. Once at Hermannsburg he began detailed studies of the Aranda peoples, their language, society and customs. His work was published in Frankfurt in 1907; in the 1980s, Rev Hans Oberscheidt painstakingly translated Strehlow's work into English; an earlier translation had been done in the 1930s.

The copy of Strehlow's study of the Aranda and Loritja peoples of Central Australia is from the library of the late missionary pastor, Pastor Friedrich W. Albrecht and his wife Minna. It was presented to Australian Lutheran College in their memory by their children, Helene, Theodor, Paul, Minna and Martin and their families, in 2007, a centenary after its publication (1907).

A photo at the beginning of the book, shows the four Aboriginal men who told Strehlow most of the stories. At the end, enclosed in a pocket, are extensive family trees, showing several generations of people with their traditional Aranda names and their totems, and at the bottom of the family trees, converted Christians bearing biblical names.

## Songs of Central Australia

by T.G.H. Strehlow. Published by Angus & Robertson, 1971.

Not all rare books are centuries old. This book is just 50 years old and the magnum opus of the renowned anthropologist. In this heavy tome of 775 pages, Ted Strehlow gives the text in Arrernte or other Aboriginal languages and in English translation, of hundreds of traditional poems, "each associated with a definite ceremonial centre and with a mythical supernatural being or a mythical group of totemic ancestors."

Unfortunately, Strehlow saw himself as the final curator of a dead or dying culture and saw these songs as his own personal possessions. In fact, the Aboriginal culture continued to thrive and these songs continued to function as ceremonial songs which denoted ownership of land and authority in that culture. He failed to recognise this reality and reacted badly to the younger generation who objected to the publication of these sacred songs. Eventually, the book had to be taken off the shelf and placed out of circulation amongst the rare books.

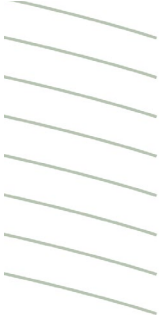
## The 'Luther Bible'

The "Luther Bible" comes to us from over the centuries and across the oceans. It is a priceless heirloom of the Reformation, brought to Australia as a treasured family possession by German immigrants in the nineteenth century. It is an early printed work, published in Wittenberg in Germany in 1551. It was done in the workshop of Hans Lufft, the town printer, who printed most of Luther's works.



The Bible was presented to the Immanuel Seminary, a forerunner of the Australian Lutheran College, by J.E. Kotzur in 1954. The book itself is a large and heavy object, measuring 25cm in width, 37cm in length and 13cm in height. It has covers of tooled pigskin and metal corners and clasps. The particular beauty of this edition lies in its illustrations. They are all done as woodcuts and hand coloured. The Luther Bible has a total of 172 in-text illustrations, two illustrated title pages and one full-page frontispiece to Genesis 1.





The border illustration is the same for both title pages: the barren tree of the law and the leafy tree of the gospel. This famous image was first developed by Lucas Cranach in oil paintings and recast as a title page in the 1541 edition of the Luther Bible.

The left-hand side shows Adam and Eve sinning, and in the background, the snake on the wooden cross in the wilderness. In the foreground, Moses holds the tablets of the law, while an unfortunate sinner is being driven into the fires of hell by death and a beast wearing a cardinal's hat. In the fire can be seen a figure wearing a bishop's mitre and a monk.

On the right-hand side, a muscular Christ is driving a spear through both a dragon, representing the devil, and a skeleton, representing death. In the background, Mary is shown receiving the message of her forthcoming conception. In fact, the baby is coming to her on a beam of light from heaven. In the foreground, Christ is depicted on the cross, with a stream of blood flowing onto a half-naked sinner. John the Baptizer is pointing the sinner to the source of his forgiveness.

The frontispiece of the bible is the only full-page illustration, showing the creation of Eve from the side of the sleeping Adam. God is the largest figure in the illustration, shown wearing a rich, maroon robe and with flames emanating from his head. The maroon colour has leaked slightly onto the adjacent paper. In the background, Adam and Eve are shown eating the forbidden fruit, recommended to them by the snake. The tree is very definitely an apple tree. Also in the background, an angel is expelling the pair from the garden. They are still naked, showing no sign of the clothes God had given them. A rich assortment of animals is shown, from a snail to a lion, and even including a unicorn. The antlered deer in the foreground is depicted in careful detail. However, there is an elephant lurking in the background forest, which shows that the illustrator had never seen a live specimen. You can also see a unicorn there. The illustration is signed by Hans Brosamer with his initials and dated 1550.