

Reformation Notes

NEWS FOR PARTNERS OF THE RICHARD C. KESSLER REFORMATION COLLECTION • SPRING 2024 • NUMBER 58

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PLUS ULTRA

The image of the globe above is taken from the *Institutio astronomica* of Pierre Gassendi (1592-1655), printed in London in 1653 (1653 GASSE). The words *Plus Ultra* are taken from the imperial coat of arms of Charles V, as they appear in Johann Eck's "Sermons Thanking God for the Great Victory Given to His Imperial Majesty in Tunisia," printed in Ingolstadt in 1536 (1536 ECK).

"In the doctrine of creation it is of primary importance that we know and believe that God has not withdrawn His sustaining hand from His handiwork." —MARTIN LUTHER

FURTHER BEYOND! INNOVATION AND THE KESSLER COLLECTION

Richard Manly Adams Jr.
Margaret A. Pitts Director of Pitts Theology Library

Regular readers may notice that Pitts is a little late publishing our annual Reformation Notes. In fact, this is technically the 2023 edition, appearing in 2024! This delay is for good reason; this has been quite a year for Pitts Theology Library and the Kessler Collection. We are not slowing down in 2024, though!

We have adopted for this year the theme of "Innovation." Our acquisitions, programming, and research have always focused on how the books in the Kessler Collection reflect the innovations of the early modern period. But focusing on "innovation" this year serves as a reminder that as a library, we must continue to innovate the ways in which the public accesses and learns from these treasures. The motto you see above, the Latin phrase "*Plus Ultra*," literally means "Further Beyond!" This motto was adopted by Charles V (1500-1558), the Holy Roman Emperor for much of the 16th century (and opponent of Martin Luther). The phrase is a reference to the phrase *Non Plus Ultra* that was said to have been inscribed on the Pillars of Hercules, which flank the Strait of Gibraltar. This phrase, loosely translated as "there is nothing beyond here," was a warning to those who approached the strait, noting that the western end of the Mediterranean Sea was literally the end of the world, beyond which there was nothing. The travels of Christopher Columbus and others at the end of the 15th and early in the 16th century, though, challenged this geographical

continued on next page



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Further Beyond! (continued)

boundary and inaugurated an age of exploration. This spirit of exploration was not simply about encountering new lands and new peoples, but also about expanding what could be known about history, philosophy, anatomy, the cosmos, and even the Bible, as well as discovering and inventing the texts, tools, and methods that would allow for such expansion in knowledge. The early modern period was an age of discovery and innovation, perhaps rivaled only by the age in which we are currently living.

This historical parallel between the period documented by the Kessler Collection and the spirit of innovation that dominates conversations in our digital age is what makes the work at Pitts so exciting. It is what drives our staff to continue to find new ways to engage our audiences with the materials from the past, always in the context of asking what they can teach us about the present and the future. This is exactly what motivates us to create innovative programming this year, programming in which I hope you will participate.

An Evening with the Kessler Collection- April 11th

I would first like to invite you to one of the most significant events we have held in the history of the Kessler Collection.

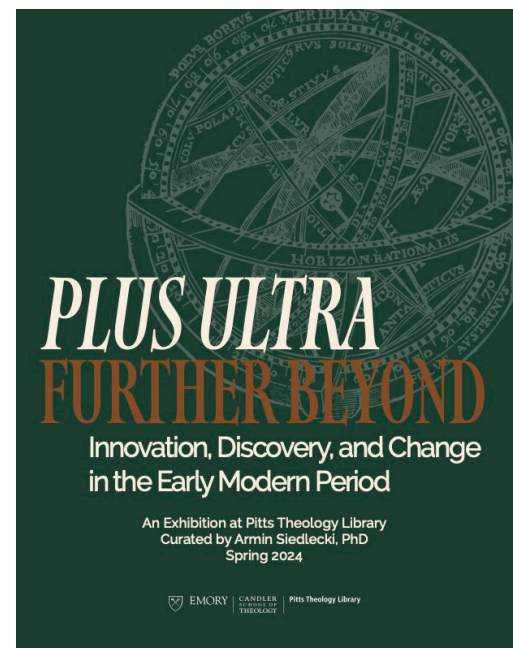
Table Talk, April 11, 2024
Professor Andrew Pettegree, FBA
University of St. Andrews



"Book History's New Frontier and the Perils of Big Data"

On Thursday, April 11th, Dr. Andrew Pettegree will deliver our keynote lecture, entitled "Book History's New Frontier and the Perils of Big Data." Dr. Pettegree is a world-renowned cultural historian of the early modern period, and for the past few decades he has been one of the leading voices in the study of the history of the book. He may be familiar to Kessler Collection supporters through his widely-celebrated book *Brand Luther* (Penguin, 2015). He is Professor of Modern History at the University of St. Andrews and Director of the Universal Short Title Catalogue (an online bibliography of all books published in the first age of print, 1450-1700). He is the author of sixteen books in the fields of Reformation history and the history of communication including *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion* (Cambridge University Press, 2005), *The Book in the Renaissance* (Yale University Press, 2010), *The Invention of News* (Yale University Press, 2014), *The Bookshop of the World. Making and Trading Books in the Dutch Golden Age* (Yale University Press, 2019) and *The Library: A Fragile History* (Profile, 2021), co-authored with Arthur der Weduwen. His most recent book, *The Book at War*, a study of the relationship between books and warfare, was published in Autumn 2023. We hosted Dr. Pettegree for one of our online Kessler Conversations (see <http://pitts.tl/kesslerconversations>), and he was one of our most popular guests in that series. In his keynote, he will help us understand how technology is changing the way scholars study the history of the book and the history of the Reformation.

Registration for the evening is required in advance, so please visit <http://pitts.tl/kessler2024> to secure your spot and invite your friends. See page 8 for a full schedule of events.!



Pitts' *Plus Ultra* Spring Exhibition "Innovation" will also be happening in the Pitts Exhibition Gallery this Spring, with a display of rare books that documents the rapid cultural changes that defined the early modern period. Pitts' Head of Cataloging, Dr. Armin Siedlecki, has curated a set of items, many from the Kessler Collection, that document some of the most significant discoveries in theology, philosophy, anatomy, and music. Included is artwork from Dürer and Cranach, medical texts by Vesalius, political texts by Hobbes, compositions by Handel, and scientific texts by Galileo, just to name a few. The exhibition also becomes the first opportunity for the public to see the Kessler Collection's most significant acquisition of the past few years, the German Nuremberg Chronicle (see page 6 for more information). It is displayed in the gallery alongside Emory's Latin Nuremberg Chronicle, giving patrons a unique opportunity to compare these two landmark publications from 1493. The gallery is open all library hours, and the exhibition will also include digital components online.

At Pitts, we are always trying to move "further beyond" prior work on the Reformation and history of the book. We look forward to sharing the fruits of our labor with you!

The Bible and the Kessler Collection

Dr. Armin Siedlecki, Head of Cataloging

Much of church history has centered on questions of how the Bible should be read and what constitutes the most reliable version of the biblical text. Of the Kessler Collection's near 4,100 titles, over 1,000 are Bibles or works directly about the Bible, including some of the most significant Bibles ever printed. The collection includes the first and second editions of the Erasmus' Greek New Testament (1516, 1519) and the Complutensian Polyglot (1514), the first printed Greek New Testaments; Martin Luther's September Testament (1522), the first German translation of the New Testament from the original Greek; and the first two editions of the Rabbinic Bible (1517, 1524), the first printings of the Hebrew Bible.

Over the past year, the Kessler Collection has added several significant Bibles. One stunning example is a German translation of the Gospels and Epistles, printed in 1516—one year before Luther posted his 95 Theses. Even before Luther's translation of the New Testament into German from the original Greek (1522), there were a number of printed German Bibles translated

from the Latin Vulgate. A beautiful copy with an ornate 16th-century binding, this new acquisition is richly illustrated with woodcut images which have been colorized by an early owner. The printer of this Bible was Thomas Anshelm, who at the time also employed a young Philipp Melanchthon (1497-1560), who was studying Theology in Tübingen at the time. One of the Bible's previous owners was the German-British artist Carl Haag (1820-1915), known for his watercolor paintings of Near Eastern motifs.

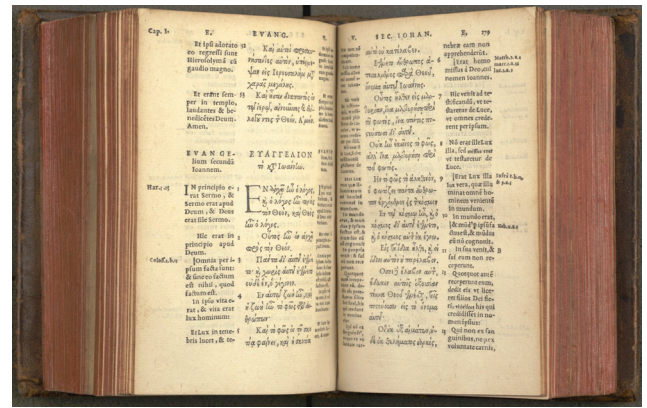
Perhaps most exciting amongst this year's Bible acquisitions is a Nuremberg printing of Luther's translation of most of the Old Testament from the original Hebrew. Each of the three parts of this volume contains a full-page woodcut image, the third of which is a crucifixion scene created by the German master artist Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), often identified as the only Dürer woodcut to ever appear in a Bible.

Pitts supplements the Kessler Collection's Bible holdings with Bibles in other collections, and 2023 was also a banner year of Bible acquisitions outside of the Kessler Collection. A much-celebrated recent acquisition is the Greek and Latin New Testament printed in Geneva in 1551 by Robert Estienne (1503-1559). This is the first Bible to use the verse number divisions that became the standard. Chapter divisions as we know them had been established in the early 13th century, and while there was an earlier Jewish tradition of textual divisions, the verse numbering known today and used in virtually every modern Bible originated with this 1551 Estienne New Testament. Pitts has been searching for this book for more than 5 years!

In January 2023, Pitts received the private collection of J. Michael Morgan,

a good friend and supporter of the library, who had built one of the finest collections of English Bibles in North America. Holdings of Pitts' newly established J. Michael Morgan English Bible & Psalmody Collection include a 1540 printing of the Great Bible, a first edition of the Geneva Bible (1578), and a first edition King James Version (1611), as well as over 50 other 16th century Bibles and more than 200 17th century Bibles; the Morgan Collection numbers more than 5,500 total volumes!

In light of these growing holdings of English, German, Latin, Hebrew, and Greek Bibles, Pitts Theology Library has become a premier center of research for the study of printed Bibles. Bibles from the Kessler and Morgan Collections are our most popular display pieces for groups that visit the library, and we are quickly digitizing some of the most significant ones to share with patrons around the world.



Top: Estienne's 1551 Latin and Greek New Testament is the first to include the modern verse number system. Estienne places the verse numbers between the columns of text, which include Erasmus' Latin, Estienne's Greek, and the Vulgate. Shown here is the beginning of the gospel of John (1551 BIBL B).

Bottom Left: Albrecht Dürer's crucifixion appears at the beginning of the third section of the 1524 printing of Luther's German Old Testament (1524 BIBL B).

Bottom Right: This hand-colored woodcut image, depicting Jesus sleeping through the storm (Matthew 8), is one of dozens of colored woodcuts in the 1516 German Bible (1516 BIBL C).

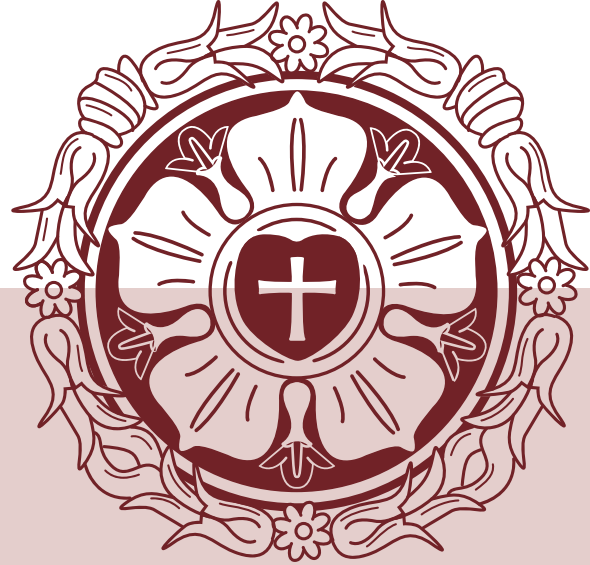


Table Talk

A Renewed Celebration of the Kessler Collection

After several years of virtual programming, Pitts welcomed Kessler Collection friends back to campus on October 26, 2022, for the inaugural "Table Talk," an opportunity to celebrate and support the Kessler Collection. The event presented a chance to see old friends, to highlight the ways Pitts librarians are researching and promoting the collection, to view our newest acquisitions, and to learn from Timothy Wengert, one of the world's leading (and most entertaining!) Reformation scholars, who gave the keynote address, "Martin Luther's Great Surprise: Translating the New Testament, 1522-2022."





CAPTIONS

A. Whitney Barth (left), Amy Wheeler (center), and Martha Perusek

B. Armin Siedlecki admires a new Kessler acquisition.

C. Brandon Wason (right) helps Richard Kessler ink and print a wood-cut image.

D. Robin Horton (right) shows Richard Kessler a wood block used for printing.

E. Ann McShane (center) helps Adam Bowers (left) and Barbara Defoe (right) bind books.

F. Don Saliers examines the Zurich Bible (1536).

G. Guests gather at the reception that began the evening.

H. Ian McFarland studies the Complutensian Polygot (1514).

I. Timothy Wengert delivers the keynote lecture.

J. Roy Wise (left) and Richard Kessler

K. Mark Knauff (left) and Randy Jones

L. Don Saliers, Doris Graham, Pat Graham, Bethany Santos, Sarah Bogue, and Adam Bowers talk over dinner (from left to right).

M. Richard Adams (left) and Khalia Williams

N. Martha Kessler considers Luther's German Pentateuch (1523).



A Landmark Acquisition

THE NUREMBERG CHRONICLE
FINALLY COMES TO THE KESSLER
COLLECTION

Dr. Brandon Wason, Head of Special
Collections.

Top right: The
Nuremberg
Chronicle opens with
depictions of the
stages of the creation
of the world, culmi-
nating in this image
of the seventh day of
creation.

Bottom left: The city-
scape of the town of
Nuremberg appears
at the very center of
the Nuremberg
Chronicle.

Bottom right:
Woodcut images
of cosmic ele-
ments like comets
appear throughout
the Nuremberg
Chronicle.

After years of searching, we have finally added to the Kessler Collection a copy of the Nuremberg Chronicle, one of the most famous books produced in the 15th century. The Nuremberg Chronicle is a history of the world, best known for its abundant illustrations, which include portraits of famous individuals, maps, depictions of biblical or historical events, and cityscapes. The work divides world history into seven parts, or ages; the first six ages span from the creation of the world to the late 15th century, recording both biblical and non-biblical events, and the seventh age details a future eschatological period. The Nuremberg Chronicle is a large folio book (over 18 inches tall) and is printed on imperial paper, the largest standard paper size of its day. The book was printed in two editions in 1493. The first was a Latin text, printed in June with an estimated print run of at least 1,400 copies. The second was a translation from the Latin into German, printed in December of the same year, with

an estimated print run of at least 600 copies. The work was relatively popular, although pirated editions published by Johann Schönsperber (Augsburg, 1496, 1497, and 1500) cut into the profits of the original publishers.

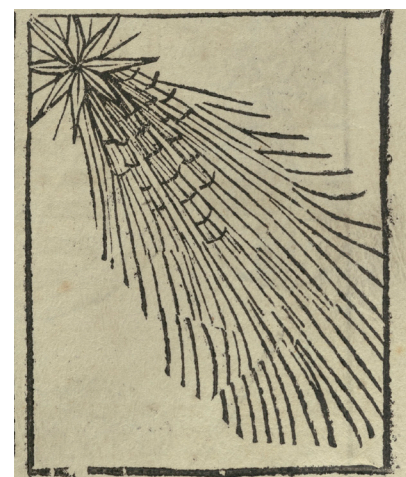
Many hands were involved in the production of the Nuremberg Chronicle. Sebald Schreyer (1446–1520) and Sebastian Kammermeister (1446–1503) financed the project and recruited Hartmann Schedel (1440–1514) to write the Latin text. Schreyer and Kammermeister enlisted Michael Wohlgemut (1434–1519) and Wilhelm Pleydenwurff (c. 1450–1494) to produce the extensive artwork throughout the book. The work was printed by the celebrated Anton Koberger (1440–1513), one of the most prolific printers of the era who printed many important works, including various editions of the Bible. At the height of his success, Koberger employed over a hundred people and ran twenty-four presses. Pitts holds ten other items printed by Koberger. The German edition of the Nuremberg Chronicle was translated by George Alt (c. 1450–1510), who slightly shortened the text to match the layout of the Latin edition.

The artwork of the Nuremberg Chronicle sets it apart from other early printed books. The images do more than simply provide a visual companion to the written word; they are as essential as the text itself. The artists created 645 unique woodcuts, many of which were reused throughout the book. In total, there are over 1,800 woodcut impressions in the work. The same woodcuts were employed multiple



times to represent different people or events. For instance, a single woodcut is used for Enoch and his wife (fol. 10r); Japheth and his wife, Funda (fol. 16r); and Abigail and her husband (fol. 42v). Many of the genealogical woodcuts were designed to be modular so that they could be reused in different ways.

Pitts acquires materials like this book to provide resources to researchers and to educate through classroom instruction, exhibitions, and other outlets. This particular work complements the library's already-robust collection of early printed books and woodcut images. With the Nuremberg Chronicle now part of the Kessler Collection, we can introduce the public to the perceptions of the world in the 15th century through magnificent artwork and images.





Preserving the Collection

Emily Corbin, Special Collections
Reference Coordinator
Ann McShane, Digital Asset
Librarian

A long-standing project of the Special Collections Department of Pitts Theology Library is the preservation of the Kessler Collection, which involves working with our in-house Digitization Team and the Preservation and Conservation Department housed at Emory's Robert W. Woodruff Library. Pitts' current focus is on the pamphlets within the Kessler collection. "Pamphlet" is a general designation used to refer to shorter printed works, generally quarto-sized printings with a limited number of pages. In their historical context, this smaller format allowed for quick production and wide distribution of theological ideas.

The preservation process begins by pulling pamphlets from the Special Collections stacks and transferring them to the Pitts Digitization Team to be photographed or scanned and uploaded onto our digital collections platform. Digitization requires close inspection and careful handling, as the lighting, handling, and angles required to photograph every page can all cause damage. Digitization is an important preservation process because it allows researchers to view these rare items without physically touching them, it facilitates remote access, and it ensures a digital copy is available even when the

physical copy is not.

Once digitized, pamphlets travel across Emory's campus to the Preservation and Conservation Department at the Woodruff Library. Emory conservators rehouse Kessler materials by constructing custom-fit protective enclosures, called portfolios, for individual items. These portfolios are designed to protect the pamphlets from damage caused by use and shelving, dust, and environmental factors that might harm them. Any pamphlets that are already damaged are also treated by the conservation staff. Treatments range from simple dry cleaning of dirt and soot and mending of torn pages to re-sewing and constructing covers for those that are significantly damaged. Pitts uses a specific tan cloth for all Kessler materials, and once the protective boxes are built, we re-shelve the items in our climate-controlled stacks for future use.

This collaboration between Pitts' Digitization Team and Emory's Preservation and Conservation Department helps ensure these valuable items will be available to researchers for generations to come. We encourage patrons to view our Kessler Collection either in person or online. Digitized images and texts from the Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection are available in Pitts Theology Library's digital collections repository.



This 1518 Martin Luther pamphlet, printed in Basel, now lives in its Emory-designed portfolio here in Atlanta (1518 LUTH).

Standing Advisory Committee for the Kessler Reformation Collection

Policy direction for the Reformation Collection is provided by a standing committee composed of representatives of Emory University and the local and national Lutheran community.

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The Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection is a repository of rare and valuable documents produced in connection with the Protestant Reformation. The collection now contains more than 4,000 pieces written by Martin Luther, his colleagues, and his opponents, and printed during their lifetimes.

Supported by the vision and resources of Lutheran laypeople Richard and Martha Kessler and partners throughout the Southeast, the collection is housed in the Pitts Theology Library of Candler School of Theology. It provides a rich resource for scholars of the Reformation and for clergy and laity who seek to understand the history of the Christian faith.

For more information about the collection, contact:
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Atlanta, Georgia 30322
404.727.4165
rmadams@emory.edu

Table Talk Spring 2024

Thursday, April 11th

All events will stream live and will be archived and available online.

Keynote Address: Dr. Andrew Pettegree
"Book History's New Frontier and the Perils of Big Data"

3:30pm-4:30pm: Registration and Exhibition
Tours (Pitts Theology Library)

4:30pm-5:15pm: Kessler Collection Updates
from the Library Director (Pitts Theology Library)

5:30pm-6:30pm: Keynote Address (Cannon Chapel)

6:30pm-7:30pm: Reception (Candler School of Theology Atrium and Plaza)

Register at <http://pitts.tl/kessler2024> or scan the QR code below.



Looking Ahead to Reformation Day 2024
Thursday, October 31st
Pitts Theology Library, Emory University

Please Support the Kessler Collection!
Gifts to the Richard C. Kessler Reformation Collection go directly toward acquisitions within and programming from the collection. Support will ensure the preservation and access to these rare book treasures, with open opportunities for the public to learn from them.

Donate online at <http://pitts.tl/kessler>

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