

GOTTHOLD HEINRICH LÖBER

Immigrant Pastor, Teacher, Shepherd

BORN: **JANUARY 5, 1797** *Kahla, Saxe-Altenburg, Germany*

DIED: **AUGUST 19, 1849** *Altenburg, Mo.*

GOTTHOLD HEINRICH LÖBER WAS A LEADING PASTOR among the Saxon immigrants who came to Missouri in 1839. He was a faithful shepherd and beloved teacher, and was instrumental in the founding of the Missouri Synod.

Löber was educated in German universities, serving as a tutor at Jena 1819–1824. As a young man, he knew he wanted to enter the ministry. After his theological studies, he was called as a pastor in Eichenberg and Bibra, Saxe-Altenburg, where he served for 14 years.

He arrived in St. Louis with the Saxon immigration in 1839 and eventually was called as a pastor in the new settlement in Altenburg, Perry County, Mo. Löber founded the church there; its first building was a log cabin. In 1845, a new church was constructed, along with a parsonage. Löber also served as a pastor to the Saxon immigrants at a number of congregations in the surrounding area.

The Log Cabin College, a school and academy for educating the young people of the community, was near the church in Altenburg. Löber soon became a teacher there and served without taking a salary. The school also trained future pastors and teachers, and it was later moved to St. Louis and named Concordia Seminary.

Löber was remembered by his parishioners as devoted and caring pastor, a powerful preacher of God’s Word. He was beloved by his students for his dedication as a teacher, one who played games with them during school recess.

Löber also worked to build up the Lutheran church and to establish bonds of Christian fellowship among its members. In 1846, he attended the preliminary meetings in St. Louis and Fort Wayne, which led to the founding of the Synod the following year. Löber was an advisory member of the Synod and appointed to the first Board of Examiners, which certified candidates for the pastoral ministry.

In 1849, a deadly epidemic hit the Altenburg settlement. For weeks Löber ministered to the sick and dying members of the congregation during a time of great sadness and hardship. Finally, he fell ill with fever and died. He was buried in Altenburg near the church, beneath a large oak.

Upon Löber’s death, Missouri Synod President C.F.W. Walther said of him: “He was the crown of our Synod, its father in Christ, its lively example of an experienced and upright servant of the Church.”

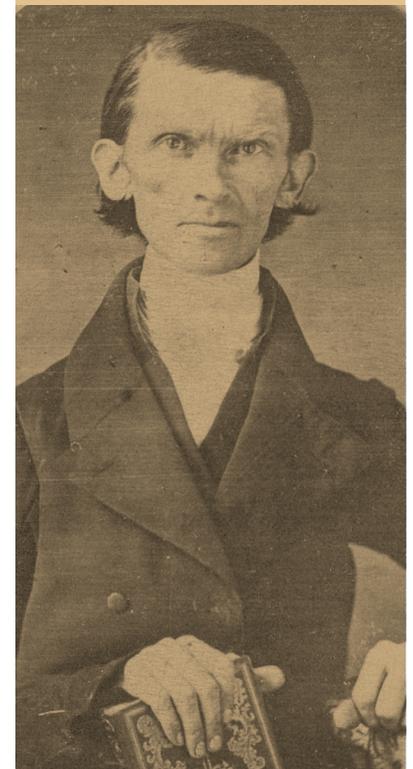
Remembered for his faithful, caring service to his flock, Löber also remains an illustration of sacrificial love for others in Christ.

For more information about the 175th anniversary of the LCMS, visit lcms.org/175.

DISCOVER MORE

Roland O. Rupprecht, “*Gotthold Heinrich Loeber*,” *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly* 11, no. 2 (July 1938): 48–54.

Thekla and Anita Loeber, “*Gotthold Heinrich Loeber, Stalwart Saxon Immigrant*,” *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly* 62, no. 2 (Summer 1989): 62–72.



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– 175 YEARS –



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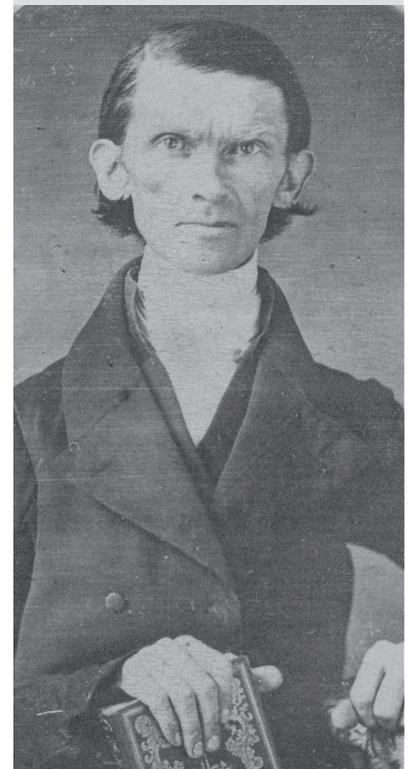
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