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THE SPIRE

OFFICE OF CHURCH RELATIONS



GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE

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Convention 2008—“The Unfinished Reformation: Faith in Daily Life”

Do you wonder what your role is in God’s plan? Do you ever feel like your life is so fast and fragmented that you are losing control? Five hundred years ago Luther spoke of the priesthood of all believers. The Reformation had two major emphases: justification by grace through faith, and vocation. Luther left his monastery and entered the world, starting a religious reformation. This reformation is unfinished in American congregations.

The Rev. Jack Fortin, keynote speaker for this year’s Gustavus Adolphus College Association of Congregations convention, will touch on this unfinished reformation in his address on the topic of “The Centered Life.” In his book titled the same, Fortin exposes the myth of a life in “balance” to one that is centered in Christ—a life that reveals the richness of our faith specifically to our work, home, congregation, and community—making the important connection between Sunday and Monday. A centered life is about discovering your calling. Fortin will bring examples, anecdotes, concrete suggestions, and biblical direction concerning living a life of meaning *centered* in Christ.



Jack Fortin will deliver the Keynote address.

The 21st annual convention of the Gustavus Adolphus College Association of Congregations is scheduled for Saturday, April 26, 2008. It promises to be a fulfilling day of learning and fellowship as Gustavus hosts pastors and delegates from the 523 ELCA congregations from across the region and country that are currently members of the Association.

Convention morning will begin with a 9:30 worship service in Christ Chapel with the Rev. Paul Harrington as homilist. The Choir of Christ Chapel and the Christ Chapel Bells will provide special music. The convention offering has been designated for the newly established Covenant Award Endowment Fund.

During a brief business meeting, Association delegates will elect members to the board of trustees of the College and also to the board of directors of the Association. The Covenant Award, which recognizes an individual who has made distinctive contributions to strengthen the partnership

between the College and member congregations, will be awarded, with an announcement to which College program the recipient will be designating funds this year. Following the keynote address, a luncheon will be held in Alumni Hall. Student speakers will share their perspectives on the shaping of their faith journey during their Gustavus experience.

Returning by popular request to the format of multiple workshops in the afternoon, selections will be offered concurrently during two breakout sessions. These will include interactive presentations by members of the faculty and others, each intended to help participants thoughtfully consider responses to the ways their faith lives are challenged and centered in daily life. A full schedule of the breakout sessions is included in this issue.

The Choir of Christ Chapel, under the direction of Conductor Patricia Kazarow, will present its home concert the preceding evening, Friday, April 25, at 7:30 p.m. in Christ Chapel. The public is encouraged to attend.

See Convention day schedule on page 2.

See Afternoon Workshop Sessions topics on page 3.

See Covenant Award Endowment Fund announcement on page 4.

**21st Annual
GACAC Convention
Saturday, April 26, 2008**

Schedule for the Day

8:30 a.m.

Registration in Campus Center
Coffee and rolls in the Courtyard Café

9:30 a.m.

Worship in Christ Chapel with the Rev. Paul Harrington
Music by the Choir of Christ Chapel and the Chapel Bells
Convention offering is designated for the new Covenant Award Endowment Fund

10:10 a.m.

Welcome, Business Meeting, and Elections in Christ Chapel
Presidential search update
Student reports about faith and life at Gustavus Adolphus College

Presentation of the Covenant Award in Christ Chapel
Brief response by award recipient

11 a.m.

Keynote Address in Christ Chapel:
Dr. Jack Fortin, "The Centered Life"

Noon

Luncheon in Alumni Hall
Student faith reflections

1:10–2 p.m. **Workshops Session I**
College Resources for Congregations
Finding Your "Spirit" in a Secular World
How to Milk a Cow to the Glory of God
Vocation and Calling: Connecting
Sunday to Monday
Walking Tour: Campus and Granlund
Sculptures

2:10–3 p.m. **Workshops Session II**
College Resources for Congregations
Honoring the Sabbath: A Lay
Perspective
On Being a Christian with Integrity
Public Discourse: Faith and Civic
Engagement
Walking Tour: What's New in the
Arboretum

3 p.m. **Reception** in Johnson Student Union foyer

Gustavus Book Mark will be open
8:30 a.m.–3p.m.

Following the worship service, times are approximate.

Workshop locations to be announced.

A Letter from the Director

Warm greetings from the Office of Church Relations and Gustavus Adolphus College! We deeply value the work that you and your congregations do to share the gospel of Jesus Christ through Word and Sacrament. It is our sincere prayer that 2008 will bring a renewed sense of joy and blessing to you in your work and in the vineyard.

We appreciate the ways in which you have affirmed us in our mission as a Lutheran college. We believe the work of the Lutheran college is of great value to your congregational ministry. Our calling to hold faith and learning in creative and authentic tension, and to be known for providing a liberal arts education of the highest regard, complements your congregational ministry. We desire a deeper connection with congregations that will help us both in our shared goal of cultivating engaged lifelong learners who lead lives of service and have a mature understanding of the faith. We are always interested in ideas about how we might better serve your congregation.

Your participation in the Association of Congregations Annual Convention on Saturday, April 26, is one way you can help Gustavus ensure that the rootedness of the College in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America remains healthy, strong, relevant, and authentic. The theme of this year's convention is "The Unfinished Reformation: Faith in Daily Life." During the business meeting, in addition to the important work of electing the College's board of trustees and Association's board of directors, we will have a report from President Peterson and hear from the leaders of a couple of student-led faith groups on campus. Dr. Jack Fortin's keynote address will focus on "The Centered Life." I ask for your help in making certain that your congregation is represented at this important gathering of College and Church.

My prayer for 2008 is that the strong bond that binds us will grow ever deeper and open up for us both even more exciting opportunities for learning, faith, and service to others. Thank you for the value you have for Lutheran higher education and for your connection to Gustavus Adolphus College.

Pastor Grady St. Dennis
Director, Office of Church Relations



GACAC Board of Directors, from left: Marilyn Beyer (assistant in church relations), Karen Wojahn, Terry Morehouse (President), Katie Sayre, Scott Lichty, Grady St. Dennis (director of church relations), Kristi Youngdahl, Julie Eiden, Brian Fragodt (Vice President), and Brian Fragodt. Not pictured: John Hogenson.

2008 Association of Congregations Convention Afternoon Workshop Sessions



“Public Discourse: Combining Faith & Civic Engagement”—Leila Brammer

While the popular press bemoans the self-centeredness of youth, an amazing number of them are taking an active role in their communities, participating, planning, and initiating action. At Gustavus, a new course in the Communication Studies Department curriculum appeals to students with these interests and helps them gain the vital skills of citizenship in our democracy. Listen to the influence they have had on important community issues, and reinvigorate your faith in the future.



“Campus & Granlund Sculptures Walking Tour”—Elaine Brostrom

Join Elaine Brostrom for a walking tour of the campus, and enjoy the sculptures by the late Paul Granlund. This is a leisurely walk; pieces discussed will be the ones in and around Christ Chapel.



“On Being a Christian with Integrity”—Mary Gaebler

The apostle Paul says that real faith is always active in love. But what does this mean in specific situations? We will combine an examination of faith (both true and idolatrous) with an exploration of the way ethical decisions are actually made. In what sense is our use of scripture, tradition, reason and experience related to our convictions, and what do our decisions and beliefs about ethical choices reveal about our deepest commitments?



“What’s New in the Arboretum?”—Emily Hoefs

The Linnaeus Arboretum provides an enriching environment to educate the mind, revive the spirit, and delight in Minnesota’s natural history. Enjoy the springtime beauty and wonder of God’s creation, experience the flowers, trees, and birds, and let our naturalist tell you of the prairie restoration and other new projects for the Arboretum.



“Finding Your ‘Spirit’ in a Secular World”—Karl Larson

How do you keep the faith? This interactive workshop offers some suggestion on how to keep one’s spiritual center in a rapidly changing world. Participants will be encouraged to share experiences and insights.



“How to Milk a Cow to the Glory of God: Toward a More Robust Sense of Vocation”—Darrell Jodock

Luther said that every Christian has a calling, a vocation. Unfortunately, the concept has too often been “flattened out” merely to endorse one’s career. So, what sort of calling is this? How is it different or more than one’s occupation? How does it affect one’s work, family life, and civic engagement?



“Vocation and Calling: Connecting Sunday to Monday”—Chris Johnson

Who am I, and why am I here? How can I make a difference in the world? What does God want me to do with my life? We will explore questions surrounding the idea of vocation or “calling” and the rich theological insights of the Lutheran tradition, society’s changing attitudes toward work and community, and each person’s giftedness for “ministry in daily life.”



“Honoring the Sabbath: A Lay Perspective”—Amy Pehrson

What exactly does the Third Commandment, “Honor the Sabbath,” mean in today’s world. Does it mean more than just going to church on Sunday morning? And if so, how can we do that? Amy will discuss the importance and the different ways that the concept of Sabbath can be thought about and realized by individuals every day.



“Deepening the Church-College Connection, & Resources for Congregations”—Grady St. Dennis

Our director of church relations, will explain the full listing of resources available for congregations and discuss the relationship between Church and College. Programs of great interest to congregations, including our youth and adult retreats programs, Partners in Education and Music, GYO, and the Three Crowns Ambassadors Program will also be presented.

“Especially for Youth: Faith Life on a College Campus”—Student Leaders

Leaders from faith connected, student-led organizations on campus will share what it’s like to live on a college campus and offer practical insights on getting the most out of the academic experience, how faith is lived out in campus life, and ways your faith can grow even stronger while in college.

Covenant Award Endowment Fund Established

How can we strengthen faith connections for Gustavus students on campus? One practical way is to identify faith-enriching programs and invest in them.

Each year the Association of Congregations awards the Covenant Award to recognize an individual who has worked to further and embody the mission of the Association of Congregations—"to strengthen the presence of the College in the Church and the presence of the Church in the College." The Association of Congregations Board of Directors and the Office of Church Relations are pleased to announce the establishment of the Covenant Award Endowment Fund, with the purpose of providing funding for a financial stipend to be awarded with the Covenant Award each year. This financial stipend will offer the means for the award recipient to further reinforce the mission of the Association of Congregations by directing the investment of the stipend to their choice of one of the many faith-enriching programs on campus.

Each year at the Association of Congregations Convention, the Gustavus program selected by the award recipient will be highlighted and celebrated for the unique way it builds up the Church and College relationship. To ensure an ongoing annual stipend of at least \$1,000, we have set a goal of raising \$25,000 for the endowment by November 2010. The Association of Congregations Board of Directors has designated the offering gifts received at the April 26, 2008, Association of Congregations Convention morning worship to building this new Covenant Award Endowment Fund.

Student-Led Conference Brings "Hotel Rwanda" Hero to Campus

On Saturday, March 8, student organizers of the 13th annual "Building Bridges" diversity conference at Gustavus Adolphus College will bring to the campus Paul Rusesabagina, a hero from the Rwandan genocide of

1994 whose story was told to the world in the film *Hotel Rwanda*. This year's conference, titled "Genocide Awareness: How Will History Judge Us," offers, in the words of student co-

chair Jing Han Soh, "the means to be involved, take action, and defeat the notion that one person can't make a difference in the world."

In 1994, Hutu-Tutsi tribal conflict in the country of Rwanda descended into madness, and more than 800,000 Tutsi people were massacred over the course of 100 days. The world turned its back on this horror. When the Hutu-led and government-backed Interahamwe began their crusade of violence against the Tutsis, Rusesabagina, manager of a luxury hotel in Kigali, Rwanda (played in the film by Don Cheadle), resolved to save a few among the many lost. He remained at his hotel and used his connections to shelter orphans and other refugees, his neighbors and family, and all told more than 1,200 Tutsis and moderate Hutus from being slaughtered by Interahamwe militia. The quiet hero, his wife, children, and the refugees eventually managed to escape to Tanzania; he later found asylum in Belgium after receiving credible threats on his life.

Rusesabagina's story has brought the world messages of hope, peace, and "never again." His emotionally charged presentation at Gustavus is a plea for preventing future events of this kind. "I

hope this will be a wake-up call," he says, "not only for Rwanda but also for the whole international community."

Building Bridges is a student-led, student-initiated conference dedicated to

addressing global diversity issues in a proactive, social, and informative way, promoting mutual respect and understanding about diversity in the larger community.



Paul Rusesabagina with Don Cheadle

The conference event is open to the public, however, tickets are required and may be purchased in advance. Tickets are \$8 per person, but are complimentary for visiting college and high school students, and Gustavus students, faculty, and staff with a valid ID. For ticket reservations or more information, visit the conference website (gustavus.edu/diversity/buildingbridges/) or call the Diversity Center at 507-933-7669.

Schedule for Building Bridges Conference March 8, 2008

- 9 a.m. Registration in the C. Charles Jackson Campus Center
- 10 a.m. Conference Opening
"I Am... We Are" Social Justice Performance
Keynote Address by Paul Rusesabagina
- 12:30 p.m. Lunch on your own.
Luncheon with Paul Rusesabagina by invitation only
- 1:30–2:30 p.m. Workshop Session I
- 2:30–3:30 p.m. Workshop Session II
- 3:30–6:00 p.m. Kids Against Hunger Food Packaging Activity

Ellen Ruiters '97: Gustie Builds Hope, Unity, and Community



Ellen Higginbotham Ruiters '97 exemplifies commitment in working towards a free and peaceful world, and doing this on a one-to-one level.

Living in Cape Town, South Africa, Ruiters founded Africa Jam, a faith-based program for youth, with after-school activities that accompany a ministry of Bible study and fellowship. This Christian youth empowerment organization currently

serves 10,000 high school youth. As Africa Jam's executive director, Ruiters looks for leadership potential in the people she meets and finds blessings and opportunities along the way. On campus on October 30 to receive the Service Award 2007, she introduced us to Loyiso, a South African youth "bursting" with potential, who is now a youth leader in an after-school drama program that attracts over 100 youth who attend on a daily basis.

At the heart of the inspirational homily Ruiters presented in daily Chapel is her conviction that every person is born for a purpose, with the need to make a

difference in the world. "Your life has meaning," she encouraged. "At this time in which we were born, our world is in need of great healing. We have war, the HIV/AIDS crisis, poverty, injustice, and our attitude is neither one of a blissful happiness that says 'Everything's gonna be all right' and an ignorance to the pain of this world, nor is it one of a defeatist attitude that says, 'Why do we even try?' We stand somewhere in the middle, and that place is called *hope*. And in hope, we step forward to give a voice to those who need a voice, unsure of the outcome."

Mentorship Program Cultivates the Amazing Potential of Lauren Fulner '09



This is the first academic year of an e-mail exchange mentoring program conceived of by the Communication Studies

Department at Gustavus. The program pairs "comm-studies" majors with department alumni who have similar interests. The program has the potential to become a blueprint for use in other departments.

Lauren Fulner '09 studied in India in fall 2006-07 with Gustavus' Social Justice, Peace and Development program. Living in India opened her eyes to a world view of needs in other cultures. Considering a minor in environmental studies, she decided to forego the sciences and minor in peace studies instead. Back at Gustavus, her involvements reflect the depth and breadth of her concerns—she is an officer in the Greens (environmental awareness), co-president of ASAP (Action Supporting All People), co-president of SHIFT (Students Helping Integrate Fair Trade), is a Chapel Apprentice, and is involved in the

Summer Servant Leadership program. Although already very busy, Fulner was encouraged by Professor Leila Brammer to be involved in the mentorship program. Based on her interest in social justice and as an activist, she was paired with Ellen Ruiters '97, who currently lives and works halfway around the world in Cape Town, South Africa.

The mentorship program involves weekly e-mails. The students are responsible for initiating the exchanges and are given suggestions to get started. As the relationship develops and the mentors describe how they are using their education and the major professionally, students guide the direction of the exchanges with the mentors. Always supportive, Ruiters has helped Fulner to remember she is in school for a limited time and it is important right now to "be in school for school," not pushing her passion for social justice issues to the front while she needs to be focused on learning.

"It's great that you're so idealistic, because that's something people lose," Ruiters wrote. She has encouraged Fulner to try to keep that idealism, to focus on how things could be, and not get lost or lose hope in the reality of how life really is.

Ruiters counseled Fulner to be intentional in her choices. It is important, Ruiters told her, to figure out what you care most about, to set specific goals, and to be careful not to take on too much at one time.

Ruiters' visit to campus in October provided the opportunity for the two women to meet face-to-face and for Fulner to personally thank her mentor. Fulner was also able to learn more in a smaller venue about the work Ruiters is doing now.

In addition to the mentoring program, Fulner is glad to be part of Gustavus' Curriculum II program, which has learning in a broader variety of areas. She hopes next fall to have an internship with the HECUA (Higher Education Consortium of Urban Affairs) Program in Minneapolis, working with environmental concerns.

Fulner, from Naperville, Illinois, is a member of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, which is a member of the Gustavus Adolphus College Association of Congregations.

Calendar of Selected Events for Spring 2008

February 18

Admissions: **Gustie for a Day** for prospective students

February 21–24, 28–March 2

Theatre: *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* *

March 8

“Building Bridges” Conference: “Genocide Awareness: How Will History Judge Us?” with keynote speaker Paul Rusesabagina

March 9

Gustavus Music Showcase featuring the Gustavus Choir, Symphony Orchestra, and Wind Orchestra, 2 p.m., Orchestra Hall, Minneapolis

April 3

Rydell Lecture: Frans B. M. de Waal

April 26:

GACAC Convention: “The Unfinished Reformation: Faith in Daily Life,” with keynote speaker Jack Fortin ***

April 21

Continuing Education: **John Shelby Spong** lecture

April 30

MAYDAY! Peace Conference: “Troubled Water,” with keynote speaker Aaron Wolf

May 8–11

Theatre: *Fefu and Her Friends* *

June 1

Commencement 2008 **

* Contact the Gustavus Ticket Center 507-933-7590 for tickets.

** Contact College Relations for more information and tickets.

*** Contact the Office of Church Relations 507-933-7001 to register.

See article in this issue for registration and ticket information.

Primatologist is 2008 Rydell Professor



Frans B.M. de Waal Nobel

Conference, will return to the campus for the first two weeks of April as the 2008 Drs. Robert E. and Susan T. Rydell Professor at Gustavus Adolphus College.

De Waal, the C.H. Chandler Professor of Primate Behavior at Emory University in Atlanta, Ga., and director of Living Links Center, Yerkes National Primate Research Center, also in Atlanta, will co-teach a neuroscience course with Jan Wotton, assistant professor of psychology, during the

Frans B.M. de Waal, a zoologist and ethologist specializing in primate behavior and psychology who was a featured speaker at the 1995

spring semester and present a public lecture on Thursday, April 3, at 7 p.m. in Wallenberg Auditorium of the Nobel Hall of Science. He is also scheduled to present a lecture at the Minnesota Zoo on Tuesday evening, April 8 at 7 p.m. Both presentations are open to the public at no charge.

The Rydell Professorship at Gustavus Adolphus College is a scholar-in-residence program designed to bring Nobel laureates, Nobel Conference presenters, and similarly distinguished scholars and scientists to the campus as catalysts for enhanced learning and teaching. It was established in 1993 by the late Dr. Robert Rydell and his wife, Dr. Susan Rydell, of Minnetonka, Minn., “to give students the opportunity to learn from and interact with leading scholars.” De Waal is the 11th scholar to serve as a Rydell Professor at Gustavus.

GUSTAVUS Music Showcase

GUSTAVUS CHOIR · GUSTAVUS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA · GUSTAVUS WIND ORCHESTRA

Gustavus Adolphus College and the Department of Music will again take the Gustavus Music Showcase to Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis on Sunday, March 9, at 2 p.m. The Showcase will feature the College’s three premier international touring ensembles—the Gustavus Choir, Gustavus Symphony Orchestra, and the Gustavus Wind Orchestra—in concert. This event is a unique opportunity for students, alumni, parents, and friends to celebrate music at Gustavus. A special post-concert reception will provide a unique opportunity for guests to meet the conductors and musicians.

Tickets are available now through the Orchestra Hall Box Office at 612-371-5656, 800-292-4141, or minnesotaorchestra.org/boxoffice. Tickets are \$22 for general admission and \$12 for students ages 18 and under. Share a prospective student’s name with the Gustavus Office of Admission (800-GUSTAVUS or admission@gustavus.edu) and they will receive two complimentary concert tickets.

John Shelby Spong to Lecture at Gustavus on April 21



John Shelby Spong

Can the Bible—a compilation of books written so many centuries ago—still speak to our world? Or is its primary role in the 21st century to undergird dying prejudices?

The Right Rev. John Shelby Spong, former Episcopal Church bishop of New Jersey, will lecture at Gustavus on the topic of “Making the Bible

Live in the 21st Century.” The lecture will be presented in Alumni Hall on at 7 p.m. Monday, April 21, 2008, and is open to the public without charge.

Spong, an agent for change in modern Christianity, has taught at Harvard and at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, Calif. He has lectured at universities, conference centers, and churches in North America, Europe, Asia, and the South Pacific. Among the books he has written are *Rescuing the Bible from Fundamentalism: A Bishop Rethinks the Meaning of Scripture*; *Liberating the Gospels*; and *The Sins of Scripture*.

Book Discussion to Preview Spong Lecture

John Shelby Spong served as bishop in the Episcopal Diocese of Newark, New Jersey, for more than twenty years and is considered a leading spokesperson in the world for an open, scholarly, and progressive Christianity. He is the author of 15 books, including the controversial *Why Christianity Must Change or Die: A Bishop Speaks to Believers in Exile*. As a preview to the Bishop’s visit, Gustavus religion professors Deborah Goodwin and Casey Elledge will lead a discussion of this book on Monday, April 14, 2008, at 7 p.m. in the Melva Lind Interpretive Center at Gustavus. The book calls for a “new reformation” and advocates for Christians to confront issues ranging from the role of women in the church and the treatment of homosexuals to what he describes as the “perils of fundamentalism.” Participants should read the book and come prepared for a lively discussion. (Pre-registration for the book discussion at St. Peter Community and Family Education Office, \$8; Gustavus personnel register at ehoeffs@gustavus.edu.)

Both of the above events are sponsored by the Continuing Education Program at Gustavus.

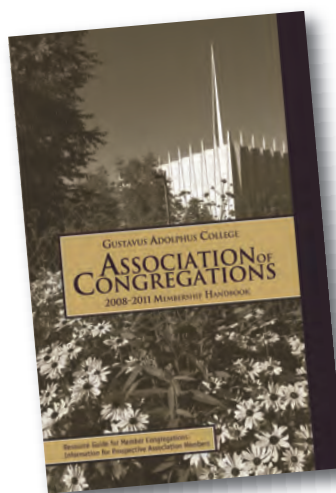
MAYDAY! Conference Focuses on Water

“Troubled Water” is the topic of Gustavus Adolphus College’s 28th annual MAYDAY! Peace Conference, to be held Wednesday, April 30, 2008, on the college campus.

Aaron Wolf, professor of geography in the department of geosciences at Oregon State University, opens the daylong conference at 10 a.m. in Christ Chapel. Wolf has been a State Department and World Bank consultant on various aspects of international water resources and dispute resolution and is one of the world’s leading experts on international water politics. Conference organizers are planning topic-related workshops, a resource center, social-action activities, and additional presenters.

The conference, an annual event designed to educate the campus community and beyond about issues related to peace and social justice, is open to the public at no charge. For more information, contact the Office of College Relations at Gustavus (call 507-933-7520 or e-mail collegerelations@gustavus.edu).

Association Member Handbook 2008–2011



The new 2008–2011 *Gustavus Adolphus College Association of Congregations Membership Handbook and Resource Guide* was mailed to Association member congregations and their delegates in November. The many helpful resources from the College that are available to member congregations are outlined in this new, updated edition.

The handbook is also available on the Church Relations website at gustavus.edu/churchrelations/resources. For more information or to receive a handbook, contact Marilyn in the Office of Church Relations at 507-933-7001.

Office of Church Relations Information

Our mission is to strengthen the presence of the College in congregations of the ELCA and to strengthen the presence of the Church in the College. If your congregation is not now a member of the Association of Congregations but is interested in becoming a member, contact the Office of Church Relations. The Association of Congregations is one of the key resources in helping to ensure that Gustavus remains a college of the Church.

The Rev. Grady St. Dennis '92

Director of Church Relations

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Toll-free: 800/726-6194

Fax: 507/933-6337

www.gustavus.edu/oncampus/churchrelations

Office hours: 8 a.m.–4:45 p.m. M–F
(unavailable during Chapel 10–10:30 a.m.)

Confirmation Retreats Program

507/933-7023

confirmation-retreats@gustavus.edu

Gustavus Youth Outreach (GYO)

507/933-7585

youthoutreach@gustavus.edu

Adult Retreat Programs

507/933-7001

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Partners Programs

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