

- Nobel Conference 45
- Three honored
- Theology and the Marketplace

# THE SPIRE

OFFICE OF CHURCH RELATIONS



GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE

Vol. 11 No. 1 / September 2009

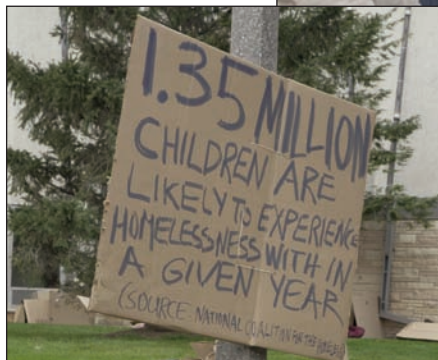
## SLEEP OUT!

A Senior High Youth Event — November 13–14, 2009

In an effort to raise awareness of homelessness and to learn about hunger issues, a group of senior high youth will join Professor Richard Leitch (political science) and Pastor Grady St. Dennis (church relations) on campus on November 13–14 for the Gustavus Sleep Out. It will be an experience offering a hint of what it might be like to not have a warm bed to sleep in or a home to go to, or not to have enough to eat.

For a span of 24 hours, participants will think about what is being done and what can be done to end hunger and homelessness in our communities. The event will feature educational sessions including presentations, videos, devotions, a walk to a nearby affordable-housing community, and an awareness project.

There is no charge for this event. The registration deadline is November 9. All participants must pre-register with a Participant Registration and Medical Release Form. No iPods, cell phones, or other electronics, money, or items of value are allowed. Participants are asked to respect the spirit of the event to experience having less. The event will be held in rain, snow, or shine, and participants should wear appropriate clothing. Cardboard boxes will be available for those who choose to sleep outdoors. There will be a designated time to sleep. For more information and a full list of expectations, or for the Participant Registration and Medical Release Form, contact the Office of Church Relations at 507-933-7001 or e-mail church-relations@gustavus.edu.



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2009–10**

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## *From the Director*

Grace and peace to you from the Office of Church Relations! “I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.” With this promise from God, Abraham went forward into unknown lands, and with that promise kept by God, the blessings of God continue to lead us onward in our lives of faith as well.

The campus is alive with activity as the new academic year unfolds. All enter for the purpose of achieving educational goals and personal growth. Intellectual challenge is expected. It is a time to be stretched and tested. It is a powerful combination when academic rigor and intentional time for personal reflection flow together as they do here at Gustavus. To enter the new academic year is to enter again into the waters of discernment: how will my gifts and talents be lived out in blessing to those whom I will serve?

The Office of Church Relations at Gustavus exists because as a college we desire to be in service to the wider community within which we are rooted. We seek to be a place you might consider as a ministry partner and intellectual resource for your congregation's educational goals and growth. Thank you for the ways in which you have been intentional in keeping your connection with Gustavus alive and growing. May this coming year be one that knits us even closer in our work together so that we both stretch even more to be the blessing we have been created to be!

Grady St. Dennis, Director of Church Relations

## *‘Exploring Religious Questions’* Our Series for Fall 2009

The Gustavus Adolphus College Office of Church Relations, working with 20 partner congregations, has developed a series of in-depth mini-courses for anyone who seeks a deeper understanding of the Bible. This fall's course, “The U.S. and the Abrahamic Faiths (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam): The Public Role of Religion,” will include both denominational diversity within the Christian traditions as well as religious diversity with Judaism and Islam, to examine how religious priorities affect American politics, laws, and life. We will also examine the meaning to Christian thinking in relationship to Jews and Muslims. We hope to engage people of the wider community with spiritual questions and deeper conversation in this not-for-credit course offering.

The course, organized by the Rev. Dr. Darrell Jodock and taught by faculty in the Religion and Political Science Departments, will be offered on six consecutive Mondays, beginning October 12 and ending November 16, from 7–9 p.m. each week. The cost for the six-week session will be \$30 and will include curriculum materials. Registration deadline is October 7, 2009. For more information or to register, contact the Office of Church Relations at Gustavus, 933-7001, or e-mail [church-relations@gustavus.edu](mailto:church-relations@gustavus.edu). (A registration flyer, with more information, can be found on line at [www.gustavus.edu/churchrelations/files/erq09](http://www.gustavus.edu/churchrelations/files/erq09)).



## Nobel Conference 45 October 6 & 7, 2009

Gustavus Adolphus College will present six world-renowned environmental and water experts, an ethicist, and a poet to discuss the past, present, and possible futures for the world's water at Nobel Conference 45, and bring to the table the socioecological and personal principles it will take if we are to change course and find solutions for the water resources issues facing our communities, our country, and the world. Featured speakers will include **R. K. Pachauri**, chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Geneva, Switzerland (which shared the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007); **Nancy N. Rabalais**, director of the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium, Chauvin; **David L. Sedlak**, professor, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, University of California, Berkeley; **Peter Gleick**, co-founder of the Pacific Institute, Oakland, California; **Larry L. Rasmussen**, Reinhold Niebuhr Professor Emeritus of Social Ethics, Union Theological Seminary, New York City; **Asit K. Biswas**, president of the Third World Centre for Water Management, Atizapan,

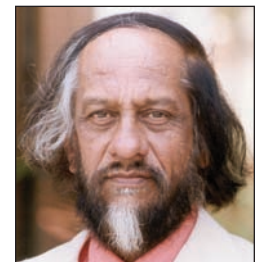
Mexico; **William L. Graf**, University Foundation Professor of Geography, University of South Carolina, Columbia; and **Derek Walcott**, poet/playwright and 1992 Nobel laureate in literature, University of Alberta.

*“Water is the lifeblood of Earth. It is the livelihood of every living thing. It is what binds us together. Without water, we shall perish from the Earth.”*  
*... Yet, the world's water supply is finite, vulnerable to contamination, and threatened by the practices of humankind.*

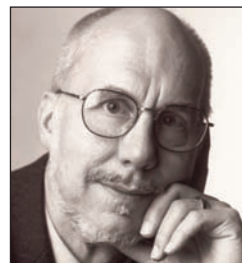
The annual science conference, now in its fifth decade at Gustavus, was named after the great Swedish inventor and philanthropist Alfred Nobel and is endorsed by the Nobel Foundation. It sets a standard for timeliness, intellectual inquiry, and free debate of contemporary issues related to the natural and social sciences.

Tickets for the 2009 conference are available from the Office of Marketing and Communication, Gustavus Adolphus College, 800 West College Avenue, Saint Peter, Minnesota. Phone 507.933.7520, or e-mail [marketing@gustavus.edu](mailto:marketing@gustavus.edu). Check out the conference website at [gustavus.edu/nobelconference](http://gustavus.edu/nobelconference).

(l to r) **Asit K. Biswas**, photo: Revista Summa; **Peter H. Gleick**, photo: Carl Ganter, Circle of Blue; **William L. Graf**, photo: Patricia Gilmartin; **R. K. Pachauri**



(l to r) **Nancy N. Rabalais**, photo: Brenda Leroux Babin; **Larry L. Rasmussen**, photo: © DougKnutson.com; **David L. Sedlak**, photo: Peg Skorpinski; **Derek Walcott**, photo: Bert Nienhuis



## Fall–Winter 2009 Events Calendar

October 6–7

### **Nobel Conference 45 — “H<sub>2</sub>O: Uncertain Resource.”**

Pre-registration and ticket  
required.

October 12–November 16  
(Monday evenings only)

### **“The U.S. and the Abrahamic Faiths (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam): The Public Role of Religion,”** a mini-course for adults. 7–9 p.m. Pre-registration necessary; cost of course \$30.

October 29

### **GACAC Service Award 2009** presented to Susan J. Alexis '71, Chapel, 10 a.m.

November 3

### **Arnold E. Carlson Award 2009** presented to Dr. David W. Johnson '84.

November 7

### **Jesus, Justice, Jazz: The Tour, a Youth Day at Gustavus.** Pre- registration necessary by Nov. 2; \$10 charge.

November 14–15

### **“Sleep-Out!” for Senior High Youth.** Pre-registration necessary by Nov. 10; no charge.

December 4, 5, & 6

### **Christmas in Christ Chapel 2009: “A Liturgy of Letters and Carols.”** Tickets required.

January 27–29, 2010

### **Trinity Institute National Conference.**

## Additional Partners Presentations for 2009

Presentations are available for adult forums, adult education classes, workshops, and seminars. Congregations can schedule as many presentations as they desire and as the speakers' schedules can accommodate. (See *Membership Handbook* for a complete explanation of this resource for Association congregations.) We want to make you aware of some of our new topics available:

### **Church Board Responsibilities: An Overview of Church Governance**

As a governing body, church board or council members possess ultimate legal responsibility for the congregations. Council members are fundamentally responsible and accountable for setting policy and monitoring congregation operations, in addition to committee work. This interactive session will outline council member responsibilities, explore the organization of the congregation's current council, and discuss the differences between a working and a policy-making group. Current, past, and prospective council members will find this session informative and helpful. — *Kirk D. Beyer, Ph.D., Director of Human Resources at Gustavus; experiences include congregational and professional board experiences at the local, state, and national levels.*

### **Sustawhat? An Introduction to the Ins and Outs of Sustainability**

“Sustainability” and “sustainable development” have become catchwords for a more responsible environmental future. How are these words used in current public policy discussions? “What are we sustaining?” and “What are we sustaining it for?” How do the Church and Christians fit into this discussion? — *Jim Dontje, Ph.D., Director of the Johnson Center for Environmental Innovation at Gustavus; charged with campus sustainability efforts, his work involving students as we partner with the wider community.*

### **Making Sense out of Climate Change Discussion**

What do we and don't we know about global climate change and human roles in making it happen? What risks, challenges, and opportunities are presented by our possible responses as citizens and as Christians to global climate change? How can we make a difference? — *Jim Dontje, Ph.D.*

### **Tools for Everyday Living: Renewable Energy and Ecological Design**

If we are called to live more lightly on the earth, our first step is to conserve the “stuff” (water, energy, and materials) that we use in our daily lives. What is the next step? What do we do about the impact of the rest of what we use? Consider renewable energy sources and the ecological design approaches that we can use in our homes and churches to make better use of the “stuff” God gives us. — *Jim Dontje, Ph.D.*

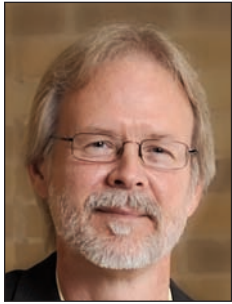
### **Gustavus Nobel Conference Review – H<sub>2</sub>O: Uncertain Resource**

Following the 45th Nobel Conference at Gustavus, this talk is an excellent next step event for congregations who would like think more deeply about the issues of the water availability and water quality. Rooted in concerns for justice and earth stewardship, some of the world's most renowned and leading water experts gathered at Gustavus to reflect on the issue of water scarcity, water supplies and sanitation in the developing world, the state of our rivers, coastal dead zones where rivers meet the sea, and the safety of our water supplies. This session will review the basic concepts discussed at the conference and offer listeners the opportunity to further reflect past, present and future of the world's water supply. *Mark Bjelland, Ph.D., Geography Department Chair, is an active member of the Environmental Studies program on at Gustavus. His current research projects include a study of eco-communities in Canada and the U.K. and watershed changes in southern Minnesota brought about by agricultural drainage.*

*More topics can be found on line at [www.gustavus.edu/churchrelations/files/handbook.pdf](http://www.gustavus.edu/churchrelations/files/handbook.pdf) (starting on page 14).*

## Music Professor Rick Orpen Receives Edgar M. Carlson Award

by Lindsey Stene



During the commencement exercises at Gustavus Adolphus College on May 31, the 2009 Edgar M. Carlson Award for Distinguished

Teaching was presented to Professor Rick Orpen by last year's recipient, Richard Leitch. Orpen, the award's 39th recipient since 1971, was nominated first by students, faculty, staff, and administrators, and finally chosen from the list of nominees by a panel of his peers who previously received this award.

Orpen received his bachelor's, master's, and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Minnesota. A member of the Music Department faculty since 1980, he teaches courses in music theory, jazz improvisation, jazz guitar, composition, and percussion techniques.

Recognized for his dedication to both his students and musical excellence here at Gustavus, Orpen is the founder of the MIDI-based music lab and in the summer months runs a music technology workshop on campus. He is a former president of the Minnesota Music Theory Consortium, and vice-president of the Minnesota College and University Council for Music. At Gustavus, he has served as Music Department chair, Faculty Senate member, and Personnel Committee member. In addition to his numerous Gustavus performances, Orpen has performed at the Ordway Musical Theatre and the Walker Art Center. In 1999 he released a CD of jazz compositions titled *Hands of Time Jazz Quartet: Live from the Chestnut Tree Café*.

## David W. Johnson '84 to Receive Arnold E. Carlson Award

by Darrell Jodock



In July 2008, Dr. David W. Johnson '84, an ophthalmologist with HealthPartners, Inc., St. Paul, and a member of Easter Lutheran

Church, Eagan, Minn., led a medical team of nine to Ilula Lutheran Hospital in Tanzania, where they screened more than 700 patients and performed 62 cataract surgeries. On November 3, the 2009 Arnold E. Carlson Award will be presented to Dr. Johnson for his humanitarian acts.

During his two-day visit on campus to accept the award (Nov. 3–4), Johnson will speak in daily chapel on Nov. 3, give a public presentation that evening at 7 p.m., and speak with other groups on campus. His presentations will focus on his sense of vocation and how this gets expressed—in his work in St. Paul, in his visit to Tanzania, and in other aspects of his life.

The Arnold E. Carlson Award was established by former Gustavus president Edgar M. Carlson in honor of his brother, who taught at Gustavus, at the former Augustana Theological Seminary, and at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary. It is given to a person who has made significant contributions by relating Christian theology to ethics in society.

## Susan Alexis '71 to Receive 2009 Service Award



Susan J. Alexis '71 believes that one ordinary individual can make a difference. For over thirteen years, Alexis, who holds a

master's degree in Spanish, has provided interpreting services for the interdenominational Volunteers in Medical Missions (VIMM) in Nicaragua, Peru, Honduras, Ecuador, Venezuela, Uruguay, Mexico, and Guatemala. She has touched the lives of thousands of impoverished people, traveling abroad with other health care volunteers to provide humanitarian aid to patients in Third-World and war-torn countries. By putting her own talents, idealism, time, and finances to work in hopes of a better world, she exemplifies living a life of leadership and service.

Alexis has written two inspirational books. *Healing the World One by One: Reflections on Third World Encounters* (Xlibris Corporation, 2001) provides dramatic first-hand accounts of individuals from various states and diverse professions as they take health care to the world's poor. *Caring Hands* (Fairview Press, 2003) illustrates short-term volunteer missions as experienced by Minnesota's Fairview Health Services employees as they serve the disadvantaged through non-profit organizations across the globe.

The Association of Congregations Service Award recognizes alumni and former students of Gustavus who have made distinctive commitments and contributions to the service of others. Since 1992, thirteen individuals have been the recipient of this award.

# 'Building an Ethical Economy: Theology and the Marketplace'



Is there a relationship between economics and Christian belief and action? How can we advocate for an ethical economy—one that works toward the biblical ideal of sufficiency for all that is resistant to exploitation? Does Christian belief have a role in shaping a new economy?

Management at Gustavus for this three-day conference experience, with keynotes live via webcast from New York, and interfaith discussion in small groups on how theology impacts economics and what steps can be taken locally.

Cost will be \$25 per person and will include printed materials and light refreshments. Meals are not included but are available in the campus Dining Service. Limited space is available for overnight accommodations at \$20 per night per person. Advance registration is necessary. Registration deadline is January 15. Forms will be available on the Church Relations website.

Gustavus Adolphus College will be a partner site for Trinity Institute's 40th National Theological Conference, to be held January 27–29, 2010. The Office of Church Relations will collaborate with the Department of Economics and

## *Jesus, Justice, Jazz: The Tour* A Youth Day at Gustavus

In July, New Orleans hosted 37,000 participants for the ELCA Youth Gathering, where high school students were encouraged to do their part to take up the cause of world hunger.

Moving forward with a project called "Change for Change," Gustavus will be a regional site for *Jesus, Justice, Jazz: The Tour*—a follow-up event being held to re-inspire the spirit and challenges of the gathering. This action-packed and fun-filled day will be an opportunity for young people to have one more powerful experience of justice, faith, advocacy, music, storytelling, and much more. All youth are welcome, including those who were not able to be at the summer gathering.

Christian artists **David Scherer '99** (aka "Agape"), "Lost and Found," and **Rachel Kurtz** will perform at this on-campus, day-long event this fall, and a follow-up call for change in the world will be issued. Cost of the event is \$10 per person (including lunch).

Visit the College's website at [www.gustavus.edu/churchrelations](http://www.gustavus.edu/churchrelations) and click on links to this event. Call the Office of Church Relations at 507-933-7001 for more information or to learn how to pre-register. We ask that pre-registration with payment reach us by November 2.



### Schedule for the Day

**10:30 a.m.:** Registration (at Christ Chapel)

**11 a.m.:** Welcome and Keynote (Christ Chapel)

**Noon:** Lunch and Small-Group Discussion

**1 p.m.:** Meet at 3 Flags for Project

**2:30 p.m.:** Concert (Christ Chapel)

**4 p.m.:** Benediction and Sending



## The Tour!

### Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, MN

Saturday, November 7, 2009 10:30a.m.-4:00p.m.

*Cost: \$10 per person, youth and adults, for the day. Cost not adjusted for partial day.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
First Last Preferred name if different

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Congregation Name \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

High school \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Grad year \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed for pre-registration \_\_\_\_\_ Registration deadline: Nov. 2, 2009 at noon

*Please help in the effort to raise \$1 million to fight world hunger. This challenge was begun at the ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans this summer.*

*You can get started by collecting "change for change." Collect a noisy offering in your church, do chores for change, collect spare change in your home, or use your own idea.\* Gather change in a special container or envelope in your home or church, label it with your name, and bring it to the event. Set a goal to collect \$20 for this cause before The Tour. We will also organize a special project on Nov. 7 to help.*

See [www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action](http://www.elca.org/Our-Faith-In-Action) for information about the Lutheran Youth Challenge and \*ideas for how to gather change.

Mail this registration form with \$10 payment to:

**J-3: The Tour**  
**Office of Church Relations**  
**Gustavus Adolphus College**  
**800 West College Ave.**  
**St. Peter, MN 56082**

Youth directors may contact office for special instructions on preregistering a group for this event. Phone 507-933-7001 or e-mail [mbeyer@gustavus.edu](mailto:mbeyer@gustavus.edu).

*WE WILL*



See campus announcement at [www.gustavus.edu/churchrelations/jji](http://www.gustavus.edu/churchrelations/jji)

## *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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Assistant Director of Church Relations

507-933-7001

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Toll-free: 800-726-6194

Fax: 507-933-6337

[gustavus.edu/oncampus/churchrelations](http://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](mailto:confirmation-retreats@gustavus.edu)

**Gustavus Youth Outreach (GYO)**

[youthoutreach@gustavus.edu](mailto:youthoutreach@gustavus.edu)

**Adult Retreat Programs**

507-933-7001

[retreat-center@gustavus.edu](mailto:retreat-center@gustavus.edu)

**Partners Programs**

507-933-7001

[church-relations@gustavus.edu](mailto:church-relations@gustavus.edu)

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