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# THE SPIRE

OFFICE OF CHURCH RELATIONS



GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE

Vol. 10 No. 2 / January 2009

## Convention 2009: Hear the Word—Live the Word

*22nd Annual Convention to be held Saturday, April 25*



Terry E. Fretheim will bring the keynote address.

To hear the Word of God is to be introduced to the Living God and given access to a living relationship with God. To be drawn into the life of the Living God is to be drawn into the very work of God. Because God is in authentic relationship with us and the world, what we are drawn into is an ongoing relationship with God which involves both change and constancy. What does such change and constancy mean for us? For God?

Dr. Terence E. Fretheim will help us reflect upon these questions and bring the keynote address, “Implications of a God in Relationship.” Fretheim is the Elva B. Lovell Professor of Old Testament at Luther Seminary. Fretheim will share his love for Scripture and invite us to look at passages in new and different ways.

The 22nd annual convention of the Gustavus Adolphus College Association of Congregations is scheduled for Saturday, April 25, 2009. The morning worship service in Christ Chapel will feature special music by Gustavus students with the Rev. Terry Morehouse preaching. The convention offering for 2009 has been designated for the Covenant Award Endowment Fund, a special fund created in 2008 to provide an ongoing source of funds for faith-enriching on-campus programs for Gustavus students.

During the business meeting, Association delegates will elect members to the Gustavus Board of Trustees, the Association’s Board of Directors and Nominating Committee. Following the keynote address, a festive luncheon will be held in Alumni Hall.

*NEW FOR 2009!* A new afternoon workshops format will offer participants the opportunity to reflect upon the keynote presentation at a deeper level with extended presentation time and unhurried small group discussion. Three separate workshop tracks will run concurrently with each focusing upon the keynote presentation from a different perspective: personal, local and global.

- *Workshop 1:* “Relationship with God: Self Transformation” will explore the ways in which change and constancy are at work in the life of God and our ongoing personal relationship with God.
- *Workshop 2:* “Relationship with God: Loving Our Neighbor” will examine what it means that being in relationship with God involves loving our neighbor and discuss the pressing social justice and congregational care issues in our local communities.
- *Workshop 3:* “Relationship with God: Caring for Whole World” will reflect upon the implications of hearing the Word and applying it toward global justice and economic issues, and service that mends the world.

**Reminder:** Association congregations are currently updating information about their staff and delegates. Please check with your church office make sure we have correct information regarding who will be invited to represent your congregation on Saturday, April 25.

See convention schedule on page 6.

### NEW!

Convention delegates and pastors are encouraged to share a ride with youth in your congregation for a special youth leadership day at Gustavus on April 25! See article on page 3 to learn about a special event to share with your youth director!

## **The Gustavus Adolphus College Association of Congregations Board of Directors**

**The Rev. Brian Fragodt '81**  
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## *From the Director...*



With this January 2009 edition of the Spire we bring you warm wishes for a peaceful and faith-filled 2009 from Gustavus and the Office of Church Relations!

The end of the year is for me a time when memories of family and good friends fill my thoughts and remind me again how much our Lord continues to bless. The Gustavus Association of Congregations has offered us many opportunities to share in the life and growth of each other as College and Church. I am grateful for these thriving relationships. We have so much to offer each other and in these days of tightening resources our good work together in partnership makes even greater sense.

Thank you to the many who have taken advantage of the excellent ministry resources Gustavus makes available for GACAC member congregations. We are a college of the Church, and we count it a privilege to be your partner in faith and learning. May 2009 bring us opportunities to do even more together to strengthen the tie of faith in Jesus Christ that binds us!

Pastor Grady St. Dennis, Director of Church Relations

## *Beyer Named Assistant Director*

I am very pleased to announce that Marilyn Beyer has been named Assistant Director of Church Relations. Marilyn has been an important member of the Gustavus Office of Church Relations since joining the staff in August 2004 as Administrative Assistant. During a period of transition in office leadership, Marilyn's experience and skills proficiency ensured a sense of consistency and high quality for congregation programming. She continues to play a key role in the day-to-day management of the office. Her new responsibilities include: managing event planning, office communications, implementation of congregation outreach programs, coordination of guest reservations for the GACAC Retreat Center and Almen-Vickner Guest House, support for collaborative relationships, supervisor of office student workers and advisor to Gustavus Youth Outreach. A strong leadership team has been established, and I look forward to many wonderful years of serving with Marilyn as the Office of Church Relations continues to expand our ministries for strengthening the presence of the Church in the college and the presence of the College in the Church. Please join me in congratulating Marilyn Beyer in being named Assistant Director of Church Relations!



Pastor Grady St. Dennis, Director of Church Relations

# Youth Leadership Day, April 25—Engaging Youth Leaders

## Meet Abby Norlin-Weaver, Student Intern



**Abby Norlin-Weaver is enthusiastic about interning in the Office of Church Relations**

During the spring semester, beginning in February, student intern Abby Norlin-Weaver will join the staff of the Office of Church Relations. She will be at the helm in designing a youth event to be held on campus on April 25. The day will include upbeat Christian music, a keynote presentation, discussion, activities, and worship. Her vision is to invite two or three youth from each Association congregation, identified by their youth directors as the most involved youth leaders, to attend a lively day of fun, fellowship, and workshops. It will be a day of focus and discussion that will give definition to what it means to be a leader in and beyond their youth groups. Abby promises it will be fun and inspiring!

Student internships are intended to give students new perspectives on the directions they might pursue in the professional world following their undergraduate experience. These positions are meant to be intriguing, challenging, and instructional, giving students a chance to contribute in meaningful ways, and teaching students in a hands-on experience what cannot be learned in the classroom or between the covers of textbooks. Over 60 percent of Gustavus students participate in an internship while they are enrolled at the College.

Previously, Abby worked in congregational youth ministry with Normandale Lutheran Church in Minneapolis and in summer camping ministry. This semester, she hopes to become familiar with a different kind of ministry than those experiences allowed. Abby will accompany Pastor Grady St. Dennis, director of church relations, to some speaking engagements and meetings of constituents, the LYO Senior Youth Gathering, and synod meetings and conference meetings and will help with office research. She will also get experience in public speaking and will do some writing.

Abby, a senior religion major, is preparing for the field of ministry as a career. Regarding outcomes for this internship experience, she said, “I would like to gain [perspective and] practice in the different areas of ministry to better support my ability to select a specific career pathway.”

## *Exploring Religious Questions II: “Hope in a Time of Anxiety and Crisis” Educational Series for Spring 2009*

During the fall of 2008, the Office of Church Relations and the Religion Department piloted a five-week adult educational series for anyone seeking a deeper understanding of the Bible. Every seat was filled in the first series, and participants asked that we offer a second mini-course! We are focusing on a new topic for our second series of Exploring Religious Questions. Dates of the course will be Mondays, February 2, 9, 16, and 23, and March 2 (snow date, March 9), from 7 to 9 p.m.

The questions relate to our current social environment. We are living in tough times. The current economic crisis has affected people in various ways—unemployment, reduction in retirement income, home foreclosure, bankruptcy, decreased sales. Corruption and personal greed threaten our government and our local communities, and it is not a time of peace. What resources does faith offer for dealing with such crises—especially when specific fears are combined with a more pervasive anxiety? What do we learn from the Bible about how the community of faith has dealt with crises? How has America’s sense of its role in the world influenced biblical interpretation? What features of contemporary American society influence our attitude toward the future? If the *Left Behind* series provides one model of the future, is there another to be found in Christian thinking about the Bible? What can we learn about each? What is hope? Why have hope? How does it affect our attitudes and behavior? This course will help us “dig deep” to address such questions.

Instructors for the course include the Reverend Dr. Darrell Jodock, Dr. Trisha Wheelock, and Dr. Sarah Johnson—all Religion Department faculty members. Each professor has a different denominational background and area of study.

The cost for the five-week session will be \$30 and will include curriculum materials. Registration deadline is January 28, 2009. For more information or to register, contact the Office of Church Relations at Gustavus, 507-933-7001 or e-mail church-relations@gustavus.edu. (*Registration form available from our office or on the Gustavus website.*)

# Physicist and Social Activist to be Featured Guests of the Center for Vocational Reflection in 2009

## Physicist Arthur Zajonc to visit in February



Hosted by the Center for Vocational Reflection and the Hanson-Peterson Chair of Liberal Studies, **Arthur Zajonc**, professor of physics at Amherst College and director of the Academic Program of the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society, will be at Gustavus on Monday, February 16. His keynote address, “Quantum Mechanics and the Dalai Lama,” will be presented at 7:30 p.m. in Olin Hall 103 and is free and open to the public.

His research has included studies in parity violation in atoms, the experimental foundations of quantum physics, and the relationship between sciences, the humanities and meditation. He is author of several books, including *The New Physics and Cosmology: Dialogues with the Dalai Lama* and *The Dalai Lama at MIT*, co-author of *The Quantum Challenge*, and co-editor of *Goethe’s Way of Science*.

## Social Justice Conference to be held April 20–24



**Shane Claiborne**, prominent social-justice activist and spokesperson (including a recent feature on NPR’s “Speaking of Faith”), founding member of the Simple Way community in Philadelphia, and author of *The Irresistible Revolution: Living as an Ordinary Radical* and, most recently, *Jesus for President: Politics for Ordinary Radicals* will be a part of the first annual Social Justice Conference to be held at Gustavus the week of April 20–24.

Claiborne is a prominent activist for nonviolence and the redistribution of resources to the poor. His outlook on ministry to the poor has been compared to Mother Teresa, with whom he worked during a 10-week term in Calcutta. He also spent three weeks in Baghdad with the Iraq Peace Team (a project of Voices in the Wilderness and Christian Peacemaker Teams), where he witnessed the military bombardment of Baghdad as well as the militarized areas between Baghdad and Amman.

Claiborne is a graduate of Eastern University, where he studied sociology and youth ministry, and has done some graduate work at Princeton Theological Seminary, but took a leave of absence, and now is a part of The Alternative Seminary in Philadelphia.

## InSpire!

One day last fall, I jokingly lifted the backpack of one our Gustavus students to check how heavy their load was for the day. Of course, I expected the backpack to have some weight to it, but I was surprised by how really, really heavy that loaded pack was! The exchange reminded me of two realities: 1) The work of a student is very demanding, with many expectations and an overall heavy workload. 2) The support students receive from friends and family members truly goes a long way in lifting spirits.

Our hope with this column is that it might offer some helpful ideas on how you can make the students from your congregation feel loved and supported.

Here are three suggestions to consider:

- During holiday breaks have a welcome home potluck for the returning students and invite them all to wear their college colors. Have them gather for a picture to post in

your narthex area, youth room, or other bulletin board area to remind all to keep these young leaders in prayer.

- If your congregation is planning a retreat at Gustavus, make sure you let your students know that you will be on campus so they can join you. Invite them to meet your youth group during social time or free time, or to have a meal with you when you are on campus.
- Be an active listener when in conversation. Ask about their learning experiences. Encourage them in their faith walk.

Thank you for holding your students in prayer and for the ways you seek to personally reach out to them while they are away at college. Trust me—your efforts not only help lift your student’s spirits, but they feed their spirits as well, reminding them that their faith community continues to care for them during this formative time in their lives.

—Pastor Grady St. Dennis

# Commission Gustavus 150

## A Major Initiative to Chart the College's Future



### COMMISSION GUSTAVUS 150

At a gala evening attended by more than 600 faculty, staff members, alumni, and friends of the College

following President Jack R. Ohle's inauguration on October 3, James Gale, chair of the Board of Trustees, announced Commission Gustavus 150. This is a major initiative established by the Board of Trustees and designed to involve all the College's constituents in integrating and expanding Gustavus's strategic plan.

President Ohle outlined the commission's process to those attending the event. Warren Beck '67, president of Edina-based Gabbert & Beck, who has served on the board for 14+ years dating back to 1986, was named to chair the commission. Barbara Larson Taylor '93, assistant to the president for special projects, is serving as the executive director of Commission Gustavus 150. "Commission Gustavus 150 will implement the strategic plan and involve a lot of people to help us think outside the Gustavus box and identify what we want to see changed or different," said Taylor.

Eight task forces have been formed to examine different aspects of the college's strategic mission, core values, and future aspirations, and to make recommendations to the Board of Trustees on how to implement the college's strategic plan. These task forces include Academic Affairs and New Initiatives; Interdisciplinary Programs; Student Life; Community Engagement; Global and Multicultural Initiatives; Faith; Stewardship; and Facilities and Finances. Board members chair and members of the President's Cabinet facilitate the work of each of the task forces, which comprise St. Peter community members, church leaders, alumni, parents, faculty, staff, students, and other friends of the College. Each task force is guided in its discussions by a charge prepared by President Ohle in consultation with the Faculty Senate and approved by the Board of Trustees. The task forces will be informed in their deliberations by data gathered from a series of "National Summit Meetings" held around the country and involving various constituencies of the College, and by relevant information reported by faculty and staff.

To learn more about this initiative, view the website at [commissiongustavus150.org](http://commissiongustavus150.org).

## Different Dimensions of the Center for Vocational Reflection

by Amy Pehrson, CVR

Why am I here? What is my purpose? Who am I called to be? These are some of the "Big Questions" continually being asked in the Center for Vocational Reflection (CVR). We address these questions to students, faculty, staff, and, increasingly, alumni and congregations. Some students are eager and ready to do the hard work of digging in and searching for answers. However, others are not. So, this January, the CVR has found a variety of different "entry points" for students (and faculty/staff) to be introduced to these questions and the concept of vocation.

As a way of enticing students into the CVR this J-Term, we are offering a couple of fun options: Monday afternoons will be for the creative, artsy types, featuring scrapbooking, beadwork, and journaling. "Tea Time and the Big Questions" will be offered on Tuesday afternoons. Wednesday nights will be "Game Night" in the CVR. On Thursday nights, groups of students will be able to use the portable ropes course and work on team building. And

"Fondue Friday" will be a time of community and food. Two different book groups are also being offered—*The Irresistible Revolution* by Shane Claiborne (who will be visiting Gustavus in April) and *The Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho.

Also throughout January, as part of the Church Leadership Program at Gustavus, weekly "Lunch and Learn" sessions will be hosted for students who are interested in vocations in the church, focusing on different expressions of ministry: ordained, specialized, creative/musical, and social justice. This will be an informal, yet very informational and relational way for students to think about different aspects of ministry.

Our hope is that these options will encourage students, especially first-years, to see that finding a comfortable, safe space and community in which to think about and talk about some of these big questions is not scary and intimidating, but can be fun and inviting.

**22nd Annual  
GACAC Convention,  
Saturday, April 25, 2009**

**Schedule for the Day**

8:30 a.m.

**Registration**, Campus Center lower level  
Coffee and rolls in the Courtyard Café

9:30 a.m.

**Worship** in Christ Chapel with the Rev. Terry J. Morehouse

10:10 a.m.

**Welcome, Business Meeting, and Elections** in Christ Chapel  
Address by President Jack Ohle

11 a.m.

**Keynote address** in Christ Chapel  
Dr. Terry Fretheim,  
“Implications of a God in Relationship”

12 p.m.

**Luncheon** in Alumni Hall  
Student Faith Reflections  
**Covenant Award Presentation**

1:10–3 p.m.

**Workshops**

- I: “Relationship with God: Self Transformation”
- II: “Relationship with God: Loving Our Neighbor”
- III: “Relationship with God: Caring for Whole World”

3 p.m.

**Reception** in Johnson Student Union Foyer

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

*Following the worship service, times are approximate. Workshop locations to be announced.*

# Jodock to Administer Templeton Foundation Grant

by Matt Thomas, Media Relations



Darrell Jodock

The Rev. Dr. Darrell Jodock, the Drell and Adeline Bernhardson Distinguished Professor of Religion at Gustavus Adolphus College, will help administer a \$150,000 grant from the John Templeton Foundation’s Science for Ministry Initiative awarded to the Collegetown Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research.

Jodock, along with colleagues Charles F. Rodell and Thomas Sibley from St. John’s University and Donald Ottenhoff from the Collegetown Institute, will implement the grant over a three-year period to develop written materials that will help clergy integrate the findings of science with faith’s reasoning about “the way the world is,”

helping ministers and the congregations they serve to move away from simplistic solutions to the tensions between science and faith.

The grant recipients intend to select a team of scientists and theologians that will develop written materials for clergy to use in congregational settings, sermons, and adult education programs, as well as articles and essays written for external audiences. Jodock’s role will be to oversee the project, to field-test materials, and to help connect the ideas to the life of parish clergy.



## Contest at Gustavus

During this time of increased environmental awareness within the Gustavus community and around the world, many people are asking themselves, “What can I do to make a difference?” This year, Gustavus is one of 302 colleges and universities across the country participating in the recycling competition known as “RecycleMania.”

For a 10-weeks between January and March, data will be collected concerning recyclable materials and waste on campus. The immediate goals of this effort include reducing waste generated on-campus, addressing environmental issues in a positive way, having a fair and friendly competition with other schools, and increasing campus recycling participation into the future. The data will be visible through a google docs page (see the contest website at [www.recyclemania.org](http://www.recyclemania.org)).

A core group of students, including Matt Leeb ’11, Ben Carlson ’11, and Alexandra Grandelis ’11 are working to improve the campus recycling effort. They are learning about how we handle recyclables and suggesting how the campus recycling program can be improved.

This competition has been a successful benchmarking and competition tool for colleges and universities across the country. Participating schools watch how their results fluctuate against other schools and use this to rally their campus communities to reduce and recycle more. In the past, 80% of participating schools have experienced increased recycling during the competition. That said, don’t ask what you can do, *just recycle!*

**Radical**  
abundance  
a theology of sustainability  
January 21-23, 2009



## Gustavus Adolphus College

Partner site for the  
39th National Theological Conference  
January 21-23, 2009

Explore sustainability through the lens of liberation theology, and the vision of Christians working together toward social justice by considering all people as full partners in healing our planet and our communities, regardless of their social or economic status. Only in striving for sustainable relationships, rather than accumulating and consuming more for ourselves, can we discover true abundance.

Our local gathering offers the full three-day conference experience, with keynotes live via webcast from New York, and interfaith discussion small groups to consider radical ideas about abundance, sustainability, and well being.

**Cost: \$20 per person.** Includes printed materials and refreshments. Meals not included. Limited space is available for overnight accommodations at \$20 per night per person. Advanced registration is necessary.

**REGISTRATION DEADLINE: January 16, 2009**  
(Late registrations accepted if space is available—call to inquire)

**REGISTRATION CONTACT: Office of Church Relations**  
Marilyn Beyer 507-933-7001 [mbeyer@gustavus.edu](mailto:mbeyer@gustavus.edu)

This project as a partner site is a collaboration of the  
Office of Church Relations and the  
Johnson Center for Environmental Innovation



Majora Carter



Timothy J. Goringe



David C. Korten



Néstor O. Miguez



Sister Miriam  
Therese MacGillis

Trinity Institute® 39th National Theological Conference

REGISTRATION for "Radical Abundance: A Theology of Sustainability"  
January 21-23, 2009 at Gustavus Adolphus College

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Daytime Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Religious affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_ (Info used to create balance in small groups)

\$20 per person registration fee enclosed

Mail to: Gustavus Adolphus College, Office of Church Relations,  
800 West College Avenue, St. Peter, MN 56082

## 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.

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### **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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church-relations@gustavus.edu

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

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