



AN OUTREACH OF CHURCH RELATIONS

THE SPIRE

Strengthening the presence of the Church in the College and the presence of the College in the Church.

Volume 16:5 | Fall 2016

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Inaugural Gustavus Academy for Faith, Science, and Ethics a Huge Success

By Chaplain Siri Erickson, Director of the
Gustavus Academy for Faith, Science, and Ethics

In June, 39 curious and passionate high school students from nine different states and over 20 different ELCA congregations gathered on the campus of Gustavus Adolphus College to deepen their faith and reflect on their vocations through an exploration of the connections between faith, science, and ethics. The first-ever Gustavus Academy for Faith, Science, and Ethics was made possible by a generous grant from the Lilly Endowment.

The Academy draws upon both the College's rich Lutheran traditions and legacy of excellence in science education through its annual Nobel Conference as it seeks to invite high school students into conversations about vocation and ethics that arise at the intersection of science and religion. The majority of the high school students who attended this year's summer program love science and are already dreaming about careers

in fields such as cancer research, astrophysics, medicine, and genetics. Some of the students are also thinking about pursuing pastoral leadership. Many of them stated that the Academy's summer program was the first time that they had experienced a community where both faith and science were embraced in worship, conversations, and academic lectures, and thus they could be fully present and show up as their full selves.

Students who attended the Summer Program engaged in a wide variety of faith practices designed to cultivate wonder and curiosity, including matins and vespers, small group theological conversations, text studies, star-gazing, investigation of the natural world through lectures and hands-on experiments, and vocational storytelling. They also had the opportunity to learn from a wide variety of

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From the Director

PASTOR GRADY ST. DENNIS, Director of Church Relations



A number of years ago a friend of mine attempted to play a practical joke on another friend who was running a summer bible camp. My friend called the camp and when our friend answered the telephone, he said in

an angry tone, "I want to speak to the one in charge!" Our friend did not even hesitate, but calmly said, "Sure, hold on a minute. 'God, there is a telephone call for you!'"

The passage from Ephesians offers a great reminder for us as we move into our active schedules at church and on campus. The word *enthusiasm* comes from two Greek words meaning "in God." I am reminded of Colossians 3:17: "*Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*" When our actions and words are rooted in Christ, we have a renewed sense of energy

and a deeper sense of purpose. The life of faith is not meant to be a dull habit but rather a radiating light for all to see.

We hope this issue of *The Spire* gives you a glimpse into the exciting things happening at Gustavus and an idea or two about how we might enthusiastically serve you and your congregation in the coming year.

Thank you for the ways in which you have been intentional in keeping your relationship with Gustavus alive and growing. We each have been entrusted with critical parts of the Lord's calling to equip young people for purposeful lives of faith and service. We are stronger together. May this coming year be one of enthusiastic service and a deeper sense of mission for Christ!

*Render service with
enthusiasm, as to the Lord
and not to men and women.*

- Ephesians 6: 7

Upcoming Events

Nobel Conference 52 – September 27-28, 2016

Fall Exploring Religious Questions Series – Mondays: October 3-24, 2016

STEP UP Leadership Development – November 3, 2016

Christmas in Christ Chapel – December 2-4, 2016

Winter Exploring Religious Questions Series – Mondays: February 6-27, 2017

STEP UP Leadership Development – March 9, 2017

Faith Conference & Gustavus Adolphus College Association

of Congregations (GACAC) Annual Business Meeting – April 22, 2017

Gustavus Academy for Faith, Science, and Ethics – June 24-30, 2017

Freedom, Human Rights, and the Common Good: Contemporary Political Debates and Diverse Christian Responses

Exploring Religious Questions Series

October 3, 10, 17, & 24 | Olin Hall Room 103 | 7–9 p.m.

Each fall and spring the Office of Church Relations and the Bernhardson Distinguished Chair of Lutheran Studies co-sponsor the Exploring Religious Questions Series (ERQ), providing an opportunity for participants to delve deeper into the selected topic. Topics are chosen based on input from Gustavus faculty, suggestions from previous participants and community partners, as well as current events. Each session is designed to incorporate speaker presentations along with time for questions and discussion.

This fall's topic is *Freedom, Human Rights, and the Common Good: Contemporary Political Debates and Diverse Christian Responses*. During this election year and amidst domestic and international unrest, politicians and public leaders are debating a number of significant issues regarding freedom, human rights, and the common good. Contested issues range from religious freedom, freedom of speech, and the right to own guns to children's rights, food security, adequate health care, and education.

Christians here and abroad and across liberal and conservative lines are contributing to such debates, offering a variety of ideas and responses.

This series includes four evening sessions. The first session provides a framework for understanding some of the most significant freedoms and human rights debated among Christians around the world today. The next three sessions focus on particular examples of Christian concerns and diverse responses to them: the right to bear arms, freedom of speech, and religious freedom. Speakers include both Christian theologians and political scientists.

This series is open to the public. The cost is \$35/person (includes four sessions, materials, and light refreshments). Pre-registration is required. For more information on the schedule and speakers, and to download a registration form, please visit: gustavus.edu/churchrelations; or contact Cyndi Berg at 507-933-7001 or email church-relations@gustavus.edu.

Nobel Conference 52

In Search of Economic Balance—September 27 & 28, 2016

The transition to a world economy has revealed a variety of tradeoffs that polarize economists and policy makers. Optimizing a business for efficiency often results in fewer and lower paying jobs. Regulating businesses for the public good may reduce their ability and incentive to develop innovative solutions to challenging problems. In the end, we are left with questions like: Why does inequality matter? Can we bring the prosperity enjoyed by the world's advanced economies to the rest of the world? How do we grow economies in a sustainable way that benefits most, if not all of the population? The 2016 Nobel Conference: *In Search of Economic Balance*, which will take place September 27-28, brings economists from around the world to help us grapple with these questions and understand some of the challenges facing real-world implementation of economic theories.

Reserved seating tickets are \$120 each and general admission tickets are \$75 each for the two-day conference. Single day tickets are also available. A separate ticket (\$30) is needed for the closing banquet featuring Chris Farrell on Wednesday evening. High school and college student delegation tickets can be purchased for \$6 per student/chaperone, with a 10-ticket minimum. Tickets are also available for the buffet lunches at a cost of \$12.50 per person. Tickets are now on sale and can be purchased online at gustavustickets.com or by calling 507-933-7520.

More information about the Nobel Conference, including speaker and schedule information for this year's conference as well as archived video from previous conferences, is available online at gustavus.edu/nobel.



Scheduled Speakers:

Chris Farrell
Dan Ariely, PhD
Orley Ashenfelter, PhD
Paul Collier, PhD
John List, PhD
Deirdre McCloskey, PhD
Joerg Rieger, PhD

Scheduled Panelists:

Margaret Anderson Kelliher
Jodi Harpstead
Anne Krisnik
Robert J. LaBombard
Ytve Prafke

CHRISTMAS IN CHRIST CHAPEL

*"Ubuntu, Jesu: From the
Cradle of Humankind to the
Ends of the Earth"*

December 2 at 7:30 p.m.

**December 3 and 4 at 3:30 p.m.
and 7:30 p.m.**

The African notion of "Ubuntu" affirms that a person is a person through other people, or "I am because we are." To proclaim "Ubuntu, Jesu" links the nativity narrative to all of life, with the "Cradle of Humankind" as both the birthplace of humanity in Africa and the manger of Jesus in Bethlehem. Christmas in Christ Chapel 2016, *"Ubuntu, Jesu: From the Cradle of Humankind to the Ends of the Earth,"* will celebrate unity by connecting the incarnation of Christ with the creation of humankind in Africa.

Tickets for the Christmas in Christ Chapel service (\$30) and for the traditional Christmas Buffet (\$25) are now on sale. You may reserve tickets online at gustavustickets.com or by phone (507-933-7520). Learn more at gustavus.edu/events/ccc.

Can't make it to campus, or wish to share the Christmas in Christ Chapel worship experience with friends, family, or your church congregation? **Watch the live stream** on Saturday, December 3 at 7:15 p.m.

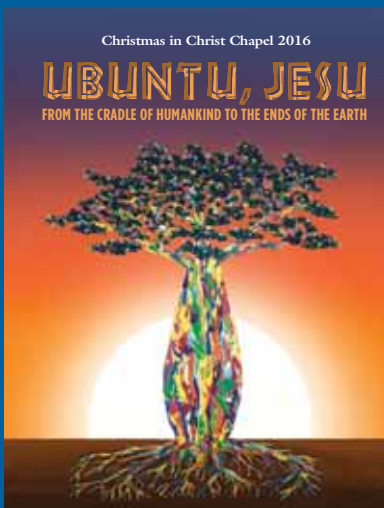


(Gustavus Academy for Faith, Science, and Ethics continued from cover)

experts in theology, biblical studies, ethics, biology, physics, astronomy, ministry, medicine, and advocacy.

This summer's featured speaker, astronomer Grace Wolf-Chase from the Adler Planetarium in Chicago, described her own journey of connecting her Lutheran faith to her scientific pursuits in lectures and during informal lunch and dinner conversations with students. The impact of all these activities was eloquently described by students at the end of the week in comments such as this one: "I am more aware of the larger ethical issues gripping our world and how I can find my vocation by engaging in solutions to these issues by using my faith and science together. Additionally, I feel as though part of my vocation is to educate my peers on how science, faith, and ethics can work together."

Please invite high school students in your congregations who have a strong interest in science and STEM-related fields to apply to be an Academy Fellow next year at the Gustavus Academy for Faith, Science, and Ethics. Because of our grant funding, we have generous travel and tuition scholarships available for outstanding students from all economic backgrounds and geographical locations. For more information or to nominate a student, visit gustavus.edu/chaplain/academy or email faithandscience@gustavus.edu.





Gustavus Leadership Program for High School Youth

Gustavus is excited to offer a new leadership development resource for high school youth. Co-sponsored by the offices of Community-Based Service and Learning and Church Relations, **STEP UP Leadership Development** is a day-long experience that will introduce youth to college-level concepts of leadership and will help them develop a stronger personal plan for continuing to grow as a leader. The day will include three seminar sessions focused on engaging students as they learn valuable skills and expand their vision for potential leadership possibilities. Participants will receive a certificate from Gustavus Adolphus College acknowledging the completion of the STEP UP leadership curriculum. STEP UP will be offered twice during the 2016-17 academic year: Thursday, November 3, 2016 and Thursday, March 9, 2017. The registration fee is \$40 per student (includes lunch and STEP UP t-shirt). Adult leaders accompanying youth must register, but attend at no charge. Adult leaders will meet separately during Leadership Seminar time slots to hear an overview of the student curriculum, learn about other resources available at Gustavus, and to share in guided small group discussions. This program is open to student groups from congregations and schools as well as individual students who wish to attend on their own.

For more information about the schedule for the day, speakers, and to register, please visit: gustavus.edu/stepup. Questions can be directed to stepup@gustavus.edu or 507-933-7001.

What do STEP UP participants have to say?

The STEP UP program is a great opportunity for youth to realize their strengths and potential. It helps them build confidence and feel empowered in leadership roles.

- Emily, Adult Leader,
American Lutheran Church, Windom, Minn.

This experience has helped me understand that passions and strengths drive what type of leader you will be . . . and to understand where your strengths fit into a group so that you will be most effective.

- Mickaela, grade 10

STEP UP was such a meaningful and valuable experience! Students are able to walk away from the day with a more tangible understanding of how they can contribute to their communities and the world around them.

- Maggie, Director of Youth and Family
Ministry, Normandale Lutheran Church,
Edina, Minn.

STEP UP was great. I liked the open discussion environment.

- Andy, grade 9

STEP UP

I'll admit it. I love Gustavus. I love everything about Gustavus from Christmas in Christ Chapel to the Swedish Rye Bread that was sent to my daughter after her recent college acceptance there. Even better, I love Gustavus because it launched me into a 22-year career in the ELCA. Currently, I am serving as a Family Minister (Associate in Ministry) at Zumbro Lutheran Church in Rochester, Minnesota. During my time in the church, I have found a deep love and passion for high school leadership training programs. Each year, I train recent confirmands as Peer Ministers to help them to engage deeper in the world around them. In their role as Peer Ministers, I also look to them to be a strong support system at Zumbro as musicians, worship assistants, peer leaders on our summer youth trips, and so much more.

As I promote the STEP UP Leadership Development opportunity at Zumbro, I am focusing on a certain population of youth. I want to take a few of our trained Peer Ministers that are also planning to participate in one of our summer mission trips. My hope is that these key youth will attend the STEP UP workshop with me and make the commitment to serve as peer leaders on the summer trip. They will be my partners in leading our summer mission trips. STEP UP will only strengthen the ministry that we are doing at Zumbro Lutheran Church. My hope and prayer is that every congregation will take advantage of this resource at Gustavus for high school youth.



Kris Robelia-Oppegard '93
Zumbro Lutheran Church,
Rochester, Minn.
Family Minister, AIM

ENDOWMENT FOR CHURCH RELATIONS

As you look towards budgeted giving and resources, both personally and within your congregation, we ask that you prayerfully consider a gift to the John D. and Ruth Hogenson-Rutford Endowment for Church Relations. Congregational and Individual gifts and pledges are currently being accepted. Our hope is to have gifts and/or pledges in-hand by April 2017. Gustavus Adolphus College continually produces leaders who actively engage in the life of the Church well beyond their time on campus. Gustavus instills and lifts up values-based leadership skills in its students which are vital to the future of the Church. I have been blessed to encounter and work alongside many Gustavus alumni who have become servant-leaders in every aspect of their lives and are faithfully working to make our communities better and stronger.



Kristen Capel,
Senior Pastor,
Easter Lutheran Church, Eagan, Minn.



John D. and Ruth Hogenson-Rutford Endowment for Church Relations

Why Endow Church Relations Now?

At the time the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) was forming, Gustavus Adolphus College created the Gustavus Association of Congregations (GACAC) as a way to maintain the grassroots, relational connections at the congregational level so valued by the Gustavus community for living rootedness in Lutheran identity. Working in partnership with the GACAC member congregations, the Gustavus Church Relations outreach has made Gustavus a leader among the ELCA colleges in actively working to collaborate with congregations to develop and share resources that serve our shared mission to young adults and society. Will our Church have a College that supports this shared mission? Gustavus Adolphus College lives out an affirmative response with a desire to do even more.

To that end, the John D. and Ruth Hogenson-Rutford Endowment for Church Relations was created as a means for providing permanent

funding for the Gustavus Church Relations staff and program, and to expand the programming outreach for the network. The GACAC network is a direct connection point for Lutheran students attending Gustavus to additional scholarship dollars for college; a conduit for your congregation to resources for youth retreats, staff development, and educational programming; and a portal that can give your congregation access to the harder-to-reach parts of our Lutheran network and beyond.

Critical to the success of this effort is the goal of 100 percent participation by Gustavus Association of Congregations member congregations. A gift from your congregation, in any amount, will help us reach this audacious goal. Will our colleges have a Church that supports this shared mission? By participating in this effort, you are also affirming your support and investing in a structure through which we can do even more together.



Rev. Siri Erickson,
Chaplain, Gustavus Adolphus College
and



Dr. Philip Clayton
Professor of Theology, Claremont
School of Theology

2017 GACAC Business Meeting and Faith Conference

30th Annual Association of Congregations Business Meeting to be held Saturday, April 22, 2017.

Mark your calendars for the 2017 Faith Conference: **"Faith, Science, and the Freedom to Serve."** The day begins with a joyous worship service in Christ Chapel featuring Gustavus musicians and a guest homilist. Immediately following worship, we will hear from Dr. Philip Clayton, professor of theology at the Claremont School of Theology, and the Rev. Siri Erickson, college chaplain at Gustavus Adolphus College—our featured presenters on the theme for the day. The Faith Conference is a free event, open to all.

The 2017 **GACAC Annual Business Meeting** will gather delegates from Association member congregations for an afternoon luncheon and meeting. During the business meeting, a welcome will be given by the President of the College and the Chair of the Board of Trustees. Delegates will vote on any business matters before the Association. Please watch for communications shared on our website at **gustavus.edu/churchrelations** and mailings directed to Association congregations and delegates. More details on the meeting will be available soon.



Being a part of the Gustavus Adolphus College Association of Congregations

How can Gustavus resources help your congregation this year? We have a wealth of resources available to our Association member congregations, and we want to serve you!

Listed below are many of the signature programs from Church Relations. Some congregations use multiple resources every year; others use fewer, or as needed.

Confirmation Retreats held on campus may be one day or overnight retreats during the academic year. Hostel space is available for overnight reservations. Please book at least six to eight weeks in advance; space is limited for groups over 40. Classrooms and space for recreation are available to meet your programming needs.

Adult Retreats are welcomed in the Retreat Center on campus. Church councils, staffs, and men's and women's groups enjoy time to socialize and work together, build relationships, and enjoy the energy of a Lutheran campus.

Individual Clergy Sabbath Retreats are available to Association pastors, usually scheduled during the week.

Partners in Education—over 30 faculty and staff are available to make presentations on a wide variety of topics during Sunday morning forums in Association congregations. Church Relations coordinates these services and the congregation pays an honorarium plus mileage.

Partners in Music—student vocal and instrumental musical ensembles may visit your congregation to assist in worship. Congregation pays honorarium and mileage.

Gustavus Youth Outreach—This student-led fellowship organization seeks to serve the needs of congregational youth programs, assisting in programming with your youth for day or evening in lock-in or retreat settings. Your congregation covers mileage expenses for the Gustavus students, meals if applicable, cost of supplies or special materials, and housing if needed. A new offering from GYO provides a service opportunity at your location or while on campus for a Youth Retreat. For more information go to gustavus.edu/gyo.

Scholarships—The *Lutheran Leadership Award* is for students from Association congregations attending Gustavus. *Matching Scholarships* are available for any students receiving congregational funds to attend Gustavus.

Since this is not an exhaustive list, please review the full list of resources at any time in our Association Member Handbook, found at gustavus.edu/churchrelations. An updated version of the handbook is in process and should be available soon. Questions or booking requests for any of these programs can be directed to Cyndi Berg in the Office of Church Relations, at 507-933-7001.

GUSTAVUS YOUTH OUTREACH

Service Project Option

Gustavus Youth Outreach (GYO) student-led teams will organize and lead a youth service project event to pack school kits for Lutheran World Relief (LWR). GYO will provide all materials, lead youth in service project reflection exercise, and deliver kits to Lutheran World Relief.

A GYO team can work with your youth group as part of a planned overnight or day youth retreat on campus. You may also schedule a GYO team to visit your congregation.

For more information on costs and available dates, please visit gustavus.edu/gyo and review the GYO Booking Request Form. Questions can be directed to the Church Relations office at 507-933-7001 or youthoutreach@gustavus.edu.





Office of Church Relations

507-933-7001 | Toll-free 800-726-6194 | gustavus.edu/churchrelations

Office Hours **8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. M-F** (unavailable during Chapel 10-10:30 a.m.)

BECOME A MEMBER!

Is your ELCA congregation not a member of the Association of Congregations but interested in joining? Contact the Office of Church Relations.

The Rev. Grady St. Dennis '92

Director for Church Relations and
College Chaplain
507-933-7661 | stdennis@gustavus.edu

Cyndi Berg

Assistant Director for Church Relations
507-933-7001 | cberg2@gustavus.edu

Confirmation Retreats Program

507-933-7023
confirmation-retreats@gustavus.edu

Gustavus Youth Outreach (GYO)

507-933-7001
youthoutreach@gustavus.edu

Adult Retreat Programs

507-933-7001
retreat-center@gustavus.edu

Partners Programs

507-933-7001
church-relations@gustavus.edu

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