



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 16:3 | Fall 2015

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Being a part of the Gustavus Adolphus College Association of Congregations

2016 GACAC Business Meeting and Faith Conference

29th Annual Association of Congregations Business Meeting to be held Saturday, April 23

"Lutheran Convictions for Creation Care"

Mark your calendars for the 2016 Faith Conference, where we will have two notable speakers joining us.

The Rev. Dr. David Rhoads is Emeritus Professor of New Testament at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, where he taught from 1988 to 2010. Before that, he taught for 15 years at Carthage College in Kenosha, Wisconsin. Rhoads studied at Gettysburg College (BA), Oxford University (MA), and Duke University (PhD).

Dr. Jim Dontje, is the director of Johnson Center for Environmental Innovation at Gustavus Adolphus College. He has a BA in Physics from Luther College; an MS in Agricultural Engineering from the University of Minnesota; and a PhD in Biosystems and Agricultural Engineering, also from the University of Minnesota.

The Homilest will be the Rev. Louise N. Johnson, president of Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa.

More details to come.



The Rev. Dr. David Rhoads



Dr. Jim Dontje

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From the Director

PASTOR GRADY ST. DENNIS, Director for Church Relations



Still fresh in my mind is the sight this summer of thousands of young people pouring into the downtown Detroit streets wearing colorful shirts and laughing and singing as they walked together. One person described the scene

as looking a bit like “a bag of skittles had exploded.”

What a sight! What an experience! I was a part of the organizing team for the ELCA Colleges and Universities who worked with the Youth Gathering planning team for the interactive space in the Cobo Center. As we made preparations for the event we worked with many local Detroit residents. On the first day of the event I happened to be riding downtown with a lady named Marsha who shared the following comment, “We have been planning for this event for months and so, we knew you all were coming. However, now that the day is here I cannot fully tell you what the sight of healthy, happy young people walking our streets means to us who live here. Thank you for coming to Detroit.”

I want to echo the words of “thank you.” I was so proud of our youth and adult leaders! Thank you to the many, many of you who stopped by the Cobo Center to spend time with us. I found it visually quite stunning to walk around that interactive space and see the many, many ways we are a church broadly engaged and the wide range of expressions of our life and ministry together.

As we shift gears from summer to fall, there are many things to be grateful for as we enter into this coming year of ministry together. One thing I am especially grateful for from my vantage point at Gustavus is the sight of healthy, happy young people returning to our campus so full of meaning-filled summer experiences. Young people who want to continue to grow deeper in their faith and who are ready to wrestle more intentionally with the serious issues of our day. Young people who are seeking to integrate their educational studies with the exploration of identity and development of gifts for a life of service in the world.

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.

We hope this issue of *The Spire* gives you a deeper sense of what is feeding our spirits here at Gustavus, a peak into the mind-set that guides our work and perhaps, an idea or two about how we might serve you and your congregation.

Thank you for the ways in which you have been intentional in keeping your relationship with Gustavus alive and growing. May this coming year be one that knits us even closer in our work together that we both stretch even more to be the blessing we have been created to be!



2015 ELCA YOUTH GATHERING

The ELCA Youth Gathering is a ministry of the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to, with and for high school-aged youth and their adult leaders. The Gathering is a triennial event that takes place over five days - Wednesday to Sunday - and includes opportunities for worship, service, fellowship, study and holy play.

Gustavus Adolphus College, along with the other colleges and universities of the ELCA were a part of the interactive learning in the Cobo Center. More than 2,000 youth came through the line to ride on the bumper cars each day. There was never a lull in the action. Youth could also visit each school's booth and find out more information about the school. We were visited by incoming students, prospects and alumni.

The next ELCA Youth Gathering will be June 27-July 1, 2018.

A Current Gustie Makes Her Life Count Through an internship at the ELCA



This past summer, Suyoung Han '16, landed a paid internship at the ELCA Churchwide Office in Chicago. Suyoung, an international student from Korea, is a public accounting major at Gustavus. She received

an email from the internship program director at Gustavus, telling her about a great opportunity as a finance intern in the budget and accounting section of the Office of the Treasurer at the ELCA. She applied and got the job and was excited to learn more about the work of the ELCA through the finance department.

In her role, she was responsible for invoices, expense reports, check requests, and American Express reports that come to Office of the Treasurer every day. "I was involved in numerous projects including the Fixed Assets Module project, and processing expense reports from the ELCA Youth Gathering that was held in Detroit this past July" says Suyoung. As Suyoung reflected on her internship, she wrote "One of the phrases I got to read almost every day is "God's work. Our hands." This phrase is printed on every financial form of the ELCA, and as I reviewed and processed them I know I made the right decision and that I was in the right place."

Through this internship, she was able to see how the numbers in her class textbooks were applied in the real world. "Working for a real organization has showed me how the numbers I work on become the foundation for the organization to fulfill its mission. My time at the ELCA has encouraged me to pursue a career in accounting, and now after this summer, I will be more confident with myself because of this experience," says Suyoung.

Suyoung took a big leap to take an internship outside of Minnesota. She is now more open to applying for job opportunities after college in different locations. Moreover, Suyoung has done this as an international student; pushing herself outside of her comfort zone by completing an internship in a new city in a country other than her own. She's a great example of what is possible for all of our students.

After her senior year, Suyoung hopes to find a job working for an accounting firm and hopefully one day come back and work in a non-profit organization.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



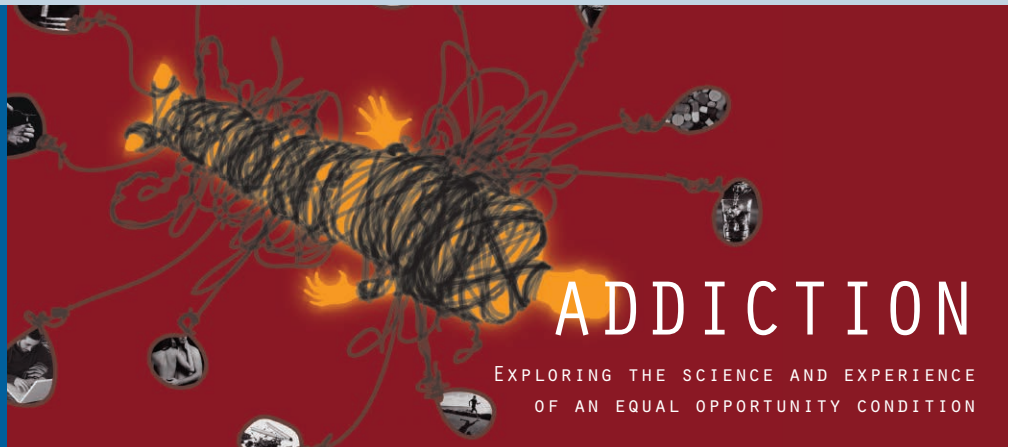
CHRISTMAS IN CHRIST CHAPEL 2015

December 4, 5, & 6 at 3:30 & 7:30 p.m.
Christ Chapel

"Shalom, Salaam Bethlehem"

Every year, thousands of people from around the world make the pilgrimage to Palestine to celebrate Christmas in the town of Bethlehem. Processions, lights, and music fill Manger Square, the city streets, and the churches. This year, Christmas in Christ Chapel will take you on a journey, joining the global travelers and the residents of Bethlehem, Palestine, to celebrate the birth of the Prince of Peace and to give voice to our shared hope for shalom, salaam, peace in this world.

Tickets for the Christmas in Christ Chapel service (\$30) and for the traditional Christmas Buffet (\$25) will be available online at gustavustickets.com. **Tickets go on sale starting at noon on Monday, October 12, 2015.** If you do not have access to the Internet, you may reserve tickets by phone (507-933-7520). Credit card payment is required for phone orders. Tickets are non-refundable.



Looking Ahead to the 51st Nobel Conference

For fifty years, the Nobel Conference at Gustavus Adolphus College has hosted preeminent scientists, theologians, and ethicists to discuss deep questions at the intersection of science and society. The 51st Nobel Conference, which is titled "Addiction: Exploring the Science and Experience of an Equal Opportunity Condition," will take place Oct. 6-7, 2015. Tickets for this year's Nobel Conference are now on sale and can be purchased online at gustavustickets.com or by calling 507-933-7520.

The 51st Nobel Conference will bring together experts in medicine, neuroscience, sociology, economics, and philosophy to explore the science and experience of addiction.

"The definitions and descriptions of addiction are contentious. Some see it as a brain disease, some others as a psychological condition, some as a consequence of environmental factors, and others as a spiritual crisis. It may be all of these or some combination—no one knows for certain," said Gustavus Professor of Philosophy Peg O'Connor. "What is certain is that the substances and behaviors to which a person can become addicted continues to grow as different experts argue the inclusion of food, sex, the internet, and exercise."

Individuals who that will speak at the 51st Nobel Conference are listed at gustavus.edu/nobel.

Reserved seating tickets are \$120 apiece, while general admission tickets are \$75 apiece. High school and college student delegation tickets can be purchased in groups of 10 for a total of \$60. Tickets are also available for the buffet lunches at a cost of \$12.50 per person. A separate ticket (\$30) is needed for the closing banquet, which will feature presenter Marc Lewis on Wednesday evening.

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

Invited Speakers:

Owen Flanagan, PhD
Carl Hart, PhD
Denise Kandel, PhD
Eric Kandel, MD
Marc Lewis, PhD
Sheigla Murphy, PhD

Invited Panelists:

Anne M. Fletcher, MS, RD
William Cope Moyers
Michael V. Pantalon, PhD
Mark Willenbring, MD



The Power of Music in Religious and Spiritual Life and for Human Health and Well-being: Wisdom from Musicians, Religious Thinkers, and Psychologists

Exploring Religious Questions Series—Fall 2015

October 12, 19, 26 and November 2 with Free Concert November 8 (Sunday).

Music has been central to cultures and faith traditions across centuries and around the world, and today a number of scientists are studying the potential benefits of music for health, well-being, and community life.

This series explores the power of music by bringing together musicians, psychologists, and religious thinkers who address a number of central questions, such as:

1. Why is music so pervasive across centuries, cultures, and religious traditions?
2. What are scientists saying about the potential health benefits of music and its role in human flourishing and quality of life?
3. How have musicians past and present spoken about the appeal, benefits, and power of music?
4. What diverse forms of music do we find in religious communities in the past and around the world today?
5. What do the Bible, other sacred texts, theologians, and religious thinkers say about the power of music for wellbeing and the life of faith?
6. What are some of the best ways music can be used to nurture moral and spiritual life, to strengthen faith communities, and to foster interfaith understanding and cooperation?

Schedule:

October 12: “The Power of Music in Christian Faith and Life: Biblical, Theological, and Contemporary Sources”

Jay Beech and Chad Winterfeldt

October 19: “The Beauty, Benefits, and Spiritual Dimensions of Music: Testimonies from Composers, Conductors, and Singers”

Gregory Aune and Julie Aune

October 26: “The Role of Music in Human Development, Health, and Wellbeing: Exploring and Evaluating Recent Scientific Findings”

Mark Kruger and Patricia Reeder

November 2: “Music as a Bridge to Intercultural and Interfaith Understanding and Cooperation: Exploring Judaism, Hinduism, and the Music of South Asia and Judeo-Spain”

David Jordon Harris and Nirmala Rajasekar

November 8: “Song of Wonder.” Free concert, 7:30 p.m., Björling Recital Hall
Featuring musical traditions from South Asia and Judeo-Spain, directed and performed by David Jordon Harris and Nirmala Rajasekar

Anyone who wants to explore this topic can sign up by downloading the registration form at www.gustavus.edu/churchrelations; or contact Sara Masters at 507-933-7001, smasters@gustavus.edu. Cost is \$35.

SLEEPOUT

November 13-14, 2015

7 p.m. – 4 p.m.

A Senior High Youth Event

High School youth and youth leaders are invited to join Gustavus Chaplain Grady St. Dennis and political science Professor Dr. Richard Leitch, in experiencing one night without a home. For more information and to register your group, visit www.gustavus.edu/sleepout.

There is no cost to attend, but registration is necessary.



CONGREGATION PARTICIPATION TIMELINE:

April 2016 Submit Pledge Intention

April 2017 Make Final Payment of Pledge

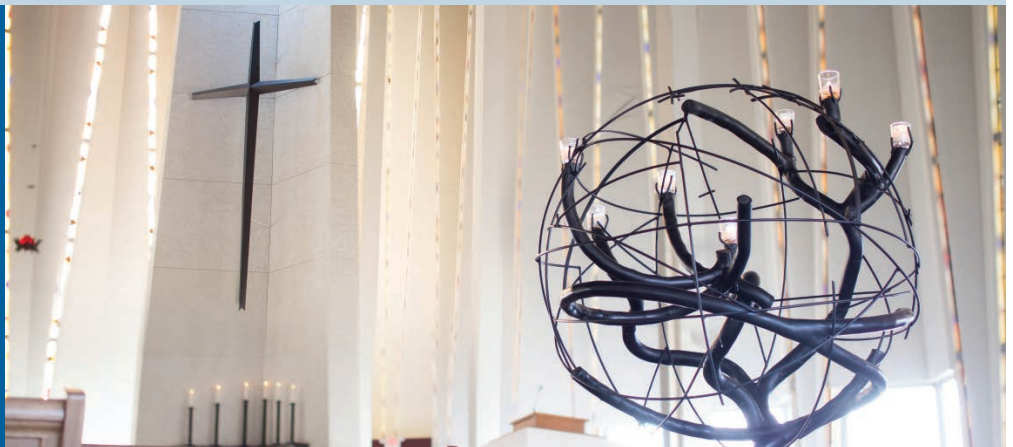
Our goal for the drive is 100% participation by our GACAC member congregations.

For more information on the Endowment for Church Relations campaign, please visit www.gustavus.edu/churchrelations/endowment. We ask all member congregations to indicate drive participation by returning the pledge form by April 2016.



**Heather Wigdahl,
Senior Pastor,
Our Savior's
Lutheran Church,
Menomonie, Wis;
Gustavus Adolphus
College 1995**

Over 20 years ago, Gustavus Church Relations helped to steer me on a completely new path of vocational discernment. The staff identified gifts in me that I hadn't fully realized myself, and I truly believe I am a pastor today as much because of that influence as any other. I am grateful for the work that Church Relations does to nurture a network of connection between the Church and the College. I am grateful for the hand Church Relations plays in forming and developing future leaders—both lay and ordained—of our church.



The Endowment for Church Relations

The network of institutions and relationships which holds our Lutheran congregations, synods, camps, colleges, seminaries, and social agencies together plays a vital role in nourishing and advancing our collective and important contribution to the world. We all make a greater impact because of this diverse network to which we belong.

For Lutherans, the church and college relationship has played a key role in the life and growth of the Lutheran theological movement dating back to the very start of the Protestant Reformation. As we approach the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation in 2017, we remember and lift up the life-giving role the church and college relationship played in the movement. Martin Luther from his teaching position at the University of Wittenberg posted his “Ninety-Five Theses” on the door of the Wittenberg Castle Church, sparking a time of critical reflection upon and dialogue concerning confession and forgiveness, preaching and the sacraments as well as other important matters facing the church and society. We believe the life-giving conversations continue to this very day.

The church and college relationship has always been a central concern and key aspect of our Lutheran identity at Gustavus Adolphus College. The Gustavus Adolphus College Association of Congregations (GACAC) was founded as a way to maintain the grassroots, relational connections that have been the hallmark and living rootedness of our Lutheran identity. We are excited to announce that Gustavus is investing

in the long term health of the GACAC network by fully endowing the Office of Church Relations. The creation of the Endowment for Church Relations Fund is a continuation of our commitment to our Lutheran roots and a means to ensure our ongoing investment in offering congregation resources.

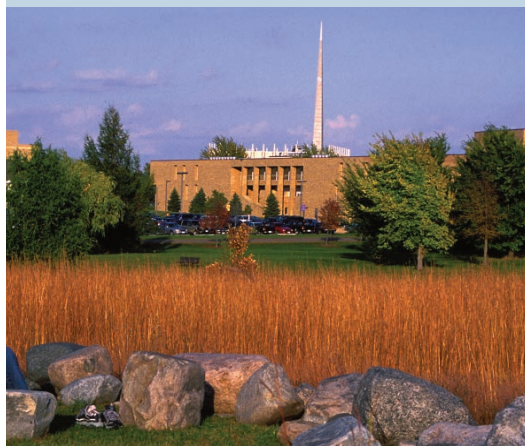
We think solidifying the church and college relationship is a tangible way we can together honor and celebrate the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation.

We invite your congregation to join us in this endeavor by making a generous gift.

We are grateful your congregation is a member congregation of the Gustavus Association of Congregations and connected to the Gustavus Church Relations staff and outreach programming that serves the GACAC and wider network of relationships.

The GACAC network is a direct connection point for your Lutheran students 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 the ability to reach in meaningful ways to other networks beyond our Lutheran relations.





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 day or overnight retreats during the academic year. Hostel space is available for overnight reservations. Please book at least 6 to 8 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, 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 pays for one honorarium per year (until funds are depleted). The congregation pays mileage, also honoraria for subsequent presentations.

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, lock-in or retreat settings. Congregation must cover mileage expenses, meals if applicable, cost of supplies or special materials, and housing if needed. 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 the above is not an exhaustive list, please review the full list of resources at any time in our Association Member Handbook, which can be found online at gustavus.edu/churchrelations. To request a booking of any of these programs, contact Sara Masters in the Office of Church Relations, at 507-933-7001.

TWO NEW OFFERINGS

GYO Service Project Bookings

GYO student-led teams will organize and lead a youth service project event to pack school kits for Lutheran World Relief (LWR). GYO will bring all materials and deliver kits to Lutheran World Relief. For more information, visit gustavus.edu/gyo.

STEP UP

We are excited to announce the creation of a new congregation resource called STEP UP, a leadership development resource for high school youth. STEP UP 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. Upon completion of the event, participants will receive a certificate from Gustavus Adolphus College certifying the student's completion of the STEP UP leadership curriculum. Congregations can bring up to five students at each STEP UP training workshop.

STEP UP is offered twice annually. During the 2015-16 academic year, the STEP UP training workshops will be held on:

- Thursday, November 5, 2015 (Registration deadline: October 26, 2015)
- Thursday, March 10, 2016 (Registration deadline: February 29, 2016)

COST: \$40/student (includes lunch and STEP UP t-shirt)

To register please visit www.gustavus.edu/churchrelations/stepup or contact Sara Masters at 507-933-7001.



Office of Church Relations

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

Office Hours 8 a.m.-4:45 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

Sara Masters

Assistant Director for Church Relations
507-933-7001 | smasters@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
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