



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 16:6 | Winter 2017

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2017 Faith Conference

The 5th annual Faith Conference will be held on Saturday, April 22, 2017 concluding our five-year series: Road to the Reformation: Deepening Our Lutheran Theological Roots. The 2017 Faith Conference theme: *“Faith, Science, and the Freedom to Serve”* will explore the creative alliances being built between religion and science in order to address the world’s most pressing challenges.

The day begins with a worship service in Christ Chapel at 9:30 a.m. Worship will feature Gustavus musicians and special guest, Sarah Herzer '99, Kantor at the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany. We are delighted to welcome Ms. Herzer as we celebrate the 500th Anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. Rev. Dan Poffenberger, senior pastor at Shepherd of the Lake Lutheran in Prior Lake, Minnesota, and chair of the Gustavus Board of Trustees, will deliver the homily.

Immediately following worship we will hear from our featured speakers. Dr. Philip Clayton, professor of theology at the Claremont School of Theology, will present: *Emergent Universe, Emergent Faith*. The Rev. Siri Erickson, college chaplain at Gustavus Adolphus College, will present: *Faith, Science, and Emerging Adults: The Reformation Continues*.

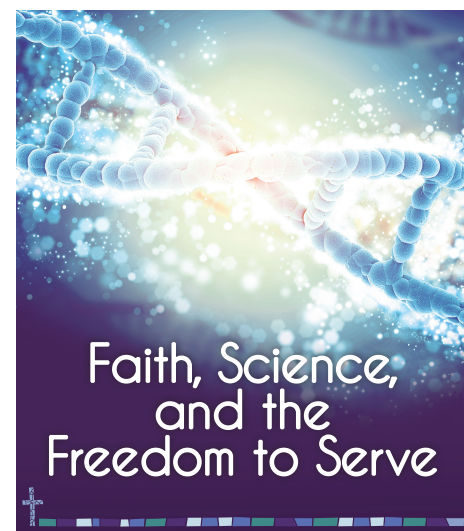
The Faith Conference is free and open to all, but pre-registration is required. Register at gustavus.edu/faithconference.

If you are not able to attend in person, the Faith Conference (featured speakers only) will be live-streamed on the day of the event starting

promptly at 10:30 a.m. For information and instructions on accessing the live stream feed, please contact church-relations@gustavus.edu or visit our website (gustavus.edu/faithconference) in advance.

30th Annual Association of Congregations Business Meeting
Saturday, April 22, 2017
12:30–2:30 p.m. | Alumni Hall

(continued on page 3)



The Rev.
Dan Poffenberger '82



Dr. Philip Clayton



The Rev.
Siri Erickson

GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE ASSOCIATION OF CONGREGATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2016-2017

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From the Director

PASTOR GRADY ST. DENNIS, Director of Church Relations



With this issue of *The Spire* we extend God's blessings to you from your partners in ministry at Gustavus Adolphus College! As we move through these days of Christmas celebration of the incarnation of God in

Jesus Christ and into our season of Epiphany, we reflect upon the life-changing and light-changing good news we proclaim in Jesus Christ.

The gift of Jesus Christ changes everything. At Gustavus, the light of Jesus Christ illumines both how we view and how we live in community. Believing all people are created in the image of God, we affirm the dignity and life of all members of our community. Challenged by Christ's call to love God with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind, and love our neighbor as ourselves—we are mindful of the many ways we fall short of this calling and how we marginalize and harm each other. Called by God to be lights in a dark world, we boldly live out a sense of community that is beyond our comfortable circles, beyond our campus boundaries, and are unabashedly committed to a greater common good and notion of community.

We know that many of you had the opportunity to be with us in December for our annual Christmas in Christ Chapel worship services. As a community we gathered around the theme, "Ubuntu, Jesu: From the Cradle of Humankind to the Ends of the Earth."

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness—on them light has shined.

- Isaiah 9: 2

The African notion of "Ubuntu" affirms that a person is a person through other people, or "I am because we are." I am delighted to announce that this year we are able to share "on demand" a rebroadcast of the Christmas in Christ Chapel experience. Simply visit the Gustavus website to take advantage of this special offer: gustavus.edu/events/ccc/

The Gustavus Faith Conference is another great gift each year that brings us together as a community. I hope you will plan to join us on April 22, 2017 for the 5th Annual Faith Conference as we gather around the theme, "Faith, Science, and the Freedom to Serve." Later that afternoon we look forward to hosting the 30th Annual Meeting of the Gustavus Association of Congregations. Thank you for being a part of the Gustavus Association of Congregations and for the light of faith you generously share with us!

Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life."

- John 1: 1-5

Upcoming Events

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

STEP UP Leadership Development | March 9, 2017

Faith Conference | April 22, 2017

Gustavus Adolphus College Association of Congregations

(GACAC) **Annual Business Meeting** | April 22, 2017

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

(2017 Faith Conference continued from cover)

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. The Covenant Award, recognizing significant contributions to the life and growth of the College and the Church, will be presented. Delegates will vote on any business

matters before the Association. The luncheon and meeting are free for congregation delegates, but registration is required. Additional details and delegate registration information for the GACAC Annual Business Meeting will be sent to congregations via email and US Mail, and will be shared on our website: gustavus.edu/churchrelations in January 2017.

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

Working in partnership with the Gustavus Adolphus College Association of Congregations (GACAC) member congregations, 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. The Church Relations office continues to work diligently to provide resources and foster relationships.

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 to additional scholarship dollars for Lutheran students attending Gustavus
- 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 to endow Gustavus Church Relations is the goal of 100% participation by Gustavus Association of Congregations member congregations. A gift from your congregation, in any amount, will help us reach this audacious goal. By participating in this effort, you are also affirming your support and investing in a structure through which we can do even more together. More information about the endowment and ways to give can be found online at gustavus.edu/churchrelations/endowment.

We are asking that gifts and/or pledges are received no later than April 2017. If you have questions, please contact Rev. Grady St. Dennis, Director of Church Relations, at stdennis@gustavus.edu or 507-933-7661.

WHY GIVE A GIFT TO THE ENDOWMENT FOR CHURCH RELATIONS?

"Innovative, visionary, hopeful—these are all words I would use to describe the unique partnership that Gustavus has forged with local congregations.

In a time when ministry is rapidly changing at the local level, this partnership offers creative possibilities for imagining the future of ministry, both on campus and in local congregations.

The leadership role that Gustavus has taken furthers and sustains the value of faith and learning, not only at Gustavus, but across Lutheran higher education and the ELCA.

I am grateful for this bold vision and for the energetic, day-to-day ministry that lives it out. I am grateful for the hope it offers all of us as we strive to live out our calling to be light in the world. This is a vision that we all share. This is a vision that brings imagination and hope to the future of ministry. I believe this vision and bringing it to life is worthy of our support."



Rev. Gary Medin
Senior Pastor, Incarnation Lutheran Church, Shoreview, Minn.



Our dear friend Rev. John D. Hogenson '81 died on January 4, 2017, following a 20-month battle with an inoperable brain tumor. He will always be celebrated for his contributions to both Gustavus and the Church, most notably for his consistent efforts as an ambassador and leader in strengthening the relational network of the Gustavus Association of Congregations. Hogenson served on the Gustavus Board of Trustees 2011-2017, and the Gustavus Association of Congregations Board of Directors 2007-2013, which he led as board president 2011-2013.



Gustavus Leadership Program for High School Youth

In November, students and adult leaders from congregations and high schools gathered to take advantage of the **STEP UP Leadership Development** resource offered through Gustavus. **STEP UP Leadership Development** is a day-long experience that introduces 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 includes three seminar sessions focused on actively engaging students as they learn valuable skills and expand their vision for potential leadership possibilities. Participants receive a certificate from Gustavus Adolphus College acknowledging the completion of the STEP UP leadership curriculum. Students who participate in STEP UP and/or the Gustavus Academy and attend Gustavus will be eligible to receive a \$500 annually renewable tuition scholarship (up to \$2,000) over four years.

STEP UP is offered twice during the academic year; the next opportunity is **Thursday, March 9, 2017, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** 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 may wish to attend on their own.

For more information about the schedule, speakers, and to register, please visit: gustavus.edu/stepup.

Questions can be directed to stepup@gustavus.edu or 507-933-7001.



Gustavus Academy for Faith, Science, and Ethics

Preparing leaders to build creative alliances between religion and science in order to address the world's most pressing challenges.

Do you have high school students in your congregation or synod who:

- are concerned with global challenges such as cancer and reproductive justice?
- want to use their own gifts and talents to make a positive difference in the world?
- wonder about how their faith fits with their interests in math or science?
- are looking for a community that shares these concerns and interests?

The Gustavus Academy Summer Program provides opportunities for high school students to explore their beliefs and to discover how scientists and people of faith are working together to address local, national, and global challenges. As an Academy Fellow, they will join with other outstanding high school students to grow in knowledge, develop leadership skills, and clarify their sense of purpose. Pastors and ministry leaders are encouraged to nominate students for the program. Students may also apply on their own. Nominations helpful, but not required.

2017 Summer Program: "Evolution, Cancer, and Reproductive Medicine"

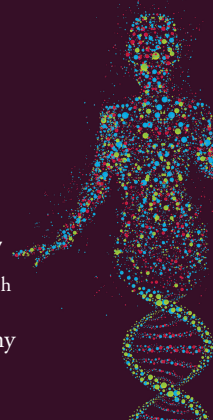
When: June 24–30, 2017

Where: Gustavus Adolphus College,
Saint Peter, Minnesota

Who: High School Students who will have completed, 9th, 10th, or 11th grade by June 2017

Cost: \$300 (Generous scholarships available to assist with program fee and/or travel.)

Apply: Online at gustavus.edu/chaplain/academy through Jan. 31



Important Dates:

Program nominations accepted **through Jan. 31**

Academy Fellows Program applications accepted **through Jan. 31**

Notification of acceptance: **on or before Feb. 20**

Upon acceptance, registration deadline: **Mar. 6**

Students who participate in the Gustavus Academy and/or STEP UP and attend Gustavus will be eligible to receive a \$500 annually renewable tuition scholarship (up to \$2,000) over four years.

For more information please visit gustavus.edu/chaplain/academy. Questions can be directed to faithandscience@gustavus.edu.



Kari in Madagascar

Kari Louwagie '16

Raised on the family dairy farm near Cottonwood, Minnesota, Kari Louwagie graduated from Lakeview High School in 2012 and studied religion at Gustavus Adolphus College. At Gustavus, Kari was involved in Chapel Choir, Vasa Wind Orchestra, Gustavus Wind Orchestra, and also served as a chapel sacristan and as an intern in the Office of Church Relations. In the fall of 2014, she had the opportunity to study abroad in East Jerusalem where she met several people who were serving through Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM). Meeting YAGM volunteers inspired Kari to rethink her plans to attend seminary directly after graduation. Instead, she decided to spend a year focusing on accompaniment and service to others and applied to YAGM. Currently serving in Fianarantsoa, Madagascar, she is the fourth consecutive YAGM to come from her home congregation, Christ Lutheran in Cottonwood, Minn. "I have received

overwhelming support from Christ Lutheran, the Southwestern Minnesota Synod, and the Gustavus community. I am extremely thankful for the opportunity to serve here in Madagascar and for all the people who have helped and encouraged me along the way," Louwagie said.

Young Adults in Global Mission is part of the **LIFE in Service Network** which also includes ALT Year, Border Servant Corps, Lutheran Volunteer Corps and Urban Servant Corps. **LIFE = Lutheran Immersion & Formation Experiences**. All LIFE in Service organizations are ministries of the ELCA or are ELCA affiliated. Together, there are 225 LIFE in Service volunteers serving annually within the United States and around the world, and more than 3,200 alumni of these programs who continue to live out the value of service in their lives.

KARI WRITES A BLOG SHARING HER YAGM EXPERIENCES

August 26: *The fact that I'll be living in another country for a year still hasn't sunk in yet...I have left my home. I have ventured from the people who have helped me grow in my faith, loved me, nurtured me, and shared their wisdom with me. Although I have left, I carry all of that and so much more with me. I may have left my home, but my home has not left me.*

September 3: *I will be living on the campus of SALT, the highest level Lutheran seminary in Madagascar, where I will be teaching English. I will have the opportunity to teach at a young women's vocational school and to work with community English clubs as well.*

September 19: *I am discovering that there really is no preparing yourself for something you've never done before. This is one of those experience that I just have to live.*

October 4: *The people here are incredibly kind and welcoming. I have been invited to join a local church choir, I have met several of my students who are excited to learn from me, and I have had people invite me to their homes to share a meal with their families. Although being a foreigner in a strange land is frustrating and overwhelming at times, I am learning to value this experience.*

November 14: *What started as a desire to love and serve others has turned into a lesson on how to allow myself to be loved in return. This is simultaneously the most difficult and most beautiful lesson I have learned here so far...*

Follow Kari's blog at madayagm.blogspot.com

ALT Year (Abundant Life Together)

Website: altyear.org | Contact: Rev. Josh Graber | (203) 772-8917 | josh@altyear.org

Border Servant Corps

Website: borderservantcorps.org | Contact: Kari Lenander
(575) 522-7119 Ext. 16 | info@borderservantcorps.org

Lutheran Volunteer Corps

Website: lutheranvolunteer corps.org | Contact: Rev. Elizabeth Flomo
(612) 787-8844 | recruitment@lutheranvolunteer corps.org

Urban Servant Corps

Website: urbanservantcorps.org | Contact: Krista Kilgus | (303) 894-0076 | krista@servantcorps.org

Young Adults in Global Mission

Website: elca.org/YAGM | Contact: Stephanie Berkas | (800) 638-3522 Ext. 2674 | globalserve@elca.org

FROM A STUDENT WORKER IN THE OFFICE OF CHURCH RELATIONS

Gandhi said, "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." I have been able to personally experience this in my time as a student worker in the Office of Church Relations. Working in this office has given me incredible exposure to servant leadership and the good that can come from genuine selflessness. As student workers, our responsibilities vary from coordinating confirmation retreats to communicating with pastors and ELCA congregations. However, what we as student workers are really responsible for is representing the values of service and community that are the foundation of the Office of Church Relations. We are more than just coworkers, we are a support system and a family that works together to serve the college and the church.

As a student, I appreciate the opportunity to work in an environment that does not just strengthen my communication and clerical skills, but those of leadership and generosity as well. As a Lutheran, I appreciate the values that Gustavus places on the traditions and the relationship between the church and the college. The outreach that our office provides builds both meaningful relationships with community members and encourages authentic acts of kindness and reflection. For three and a half years, I have had the privilege of working with people that remind me that service is not simply volunteer hours that can be listed on a sheet for credit, or written on an application for an award, but a gift we can share and a gift we can receive.

- Mikayla Kvittum-Barr '17



Front row L-R: Grady St. Dennis, Carrie Probst '18, Mikayla Kvittum-Barr '17, Danielle Seeger '19, Cyndi Berg. Back row L-R: Jake Glaser '18, Lucy Nelson '19, Matt Ouren '19

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 now available online. 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 or church-relations@gustavus.edu.



5th Annual Faith Conference

Faith, Science, and the Freedom to Serve

Saturday, April 22, 2017 | Gustavus Adolphus College | Saint Peter, Minnesota

Worship | 9:30 a.m. | Christ Chapel | The Rev. Dan Poffenberger '82

Featured Speaker | 10:30 a.m. | Christ Chapel | Dr. Philip Clayton

Featured Speaker | 11:30 a.m. | Christ Chapel | The Rev. Siri Erickson

Free and open to the public. Registration required at gustavus.edu/faithconference.

Sponsored by the Gustavus Adolphus College Association of Congregations, the Gustavus Office of Church Relations, and Thrivent Financial.



Road to the Reformation: Deepening Our Lutheran Theological Roots

Please remove and post in your congregation



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

Cyndi Berg

Assistant Director of 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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