



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 13:1 | Fall 2011

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Gustavus Celebration Begins! ses'kwi sen ten'ē əl

Welcome to the celebration of the College's 150th year

The campus community is learning to pronounce “sesquicentennial”—the word for the one-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of a significant event—as a celebration begins unlike any other that has gone before!

In 1862, Eric Norelius and other Swedish immigrant leaders identified the need in their communities to educate the immigrant population so they might succeed in their new environment as well as to teach Christian principles. These leaders recognized the need for a school in Minnesota to train their children to be leaders and to serve their communities.

The world is a very different place today, of course, than it was 150 years ago, but in spite of all that has changed, the College has stayed true to its mission. Gustavus Adolphus College has educated nearly 42,000 students to lead and serve in their communities!

Gustavus will kick off the celebration of its 150th academic year at Homecoming 2011, concluding at Homecoming in the fall of 2012. The year is a milestone to be celebrated, filled with reflections about the past, celebrations in the present, and opportunities for future engagement. Join us as we make this year count at Gustavus!

The Gustavus Sesquicentennial website, launched at the start of this school year, will help you keep abreast of celebration events and plans. Visit the site at gustavus.edu/150. Just a few items to get started:

Gustie Fridays—Show Your Pride! Wherever you work, we hope you join us for “Gustie Fridays,” a new Gustavus tradition! Wear your Gustie apparel on Fridays all year!

Flat Gus will travel the world! A group of seniors have sent 150 images of our mascot, Gus the Lion, on his way with the goal that “Flat Gus” touch every alumnus during the Sesquicentennial celebration. If you receive Flat Gus, another Gustie sent him to you. Fill out the accompanying guest book, and send him along on his journey. Check gustavus.edu/150 to see where he is now.

Gustavus will be celebrating in a city near you! Visit gustavus.edu/150 to see when and where all of the celebrations are taking place around the country.

Sesquicentennial Alumni Athletic Events will be held for every sport. Visit gustavus.edu/150 to find out where you can meet up with the current Gustavus squad!

Two new Gustavus books mark the sesquicentennial year, full of images, stories, facts, and history. Read about them on the website; they will be available in the Book Mark and online at gustavus.edu/150.



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150 AND COUNTING

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From the Director

PASTOR GRADY ST. DENNIS, Director of Church Relations and College Chaplain



God's blessings to you from the Center for Servant Leadership at Gustavus! We stand at the start of what will be a historic year in the life of Gustavus Adolphus College. This year we mark 150 years of preparing students for lives of leadership and service. As we come together and reflect on this gift and calling of Gustavus, our hearts are overflowing with feelings of gratitude, hope, and joy.

I believe each year we have so much to celebrate and be thankful for. Yet, this year our cup is truly overflowing for we reflect and celebrate not only 150 years of Gustavus, but also 50 years of Christ Chapel and 25 years of the Gustavus Association of Congregations, which each in their own way have significantly contributed to the experience and life of Gustavus.

The Church Relations outreach ministries of the Center for Servant Leadership at Gustavus exist because as a college we are mindful of the great vineyard within which our roots have been established. We take great pride in being a college of the church and we are sincere in our desire to ever deepen our relationship with the congregations. I hope that during this year you will find some way to join us to celebrate the gift of Gustavus Adolphus College and the blessings of Christ Chapel and the Association of Congregations. May this year of thanksgiving and celebration inspire us all to become even more engaged with each other as together we strive to reach even greater heights in our shared goal of developing servant leaders today.

InSpire!

Please do not forget about your young men and women who have graduated from high school and are now away at college. The schedule and pressures of college life can be very demanding and even though they are away they still need the love, support, and guidance of their congregation. You have no idea how much a simple note or act of kindness from you would mean to a young person from your congregation.

To find out if your congregation has any students at Gustavus, please check with your pastor or youth leader, because they likely received a letter from us listing their students for them. If for some reason your congregation does not have this information, do not hesitate to contact us; we would be happy to help you connect with the Gustavus students from your congregation.

Some things others do for their students include:

- Send a care package. Baking cookies or gathering goodies for a care package could be an excellent project in the congregation to help send the message to your students that they are remembered and loved.
- Write often with news from home, and an occasional dollar or two will not go unappreciated. If your student has taught Sunday school or served in a mentor role for the youth, perhaps one of the young adults could be encouraged to send a personal "thinking of you" note to their mentor off at college.
- Keep them in your personal prayers and put them on the church prayer list.

I hope you find these suggestions and this column meaningful for you as you seek to show your support and love for your Gustavus students!



Professor Jodock coordinates the Exploring Religious Questions minicourse for fall. | Photo by Marilyn Beyer



Homelessness and hunger awareness issues will be addressed with high school students during the fourth annual SleepOUT event at Gustavus. | Photos by Stacia Vogel

“Creeds, Beliefs, and Life Today” is topic for Fall ERQ

Professor emeritus Darrell Jodock will return to the classroom this fall with the Seventh minicourse in the Exploring Religious Questions series, now in its fourth year at Gustavus. Professors of religion Sarah Johnson Ruble and Blake Couey will assist in teaching the course.

The course will discuss the history of creeds and the unity that Christians found in the ancient world by constructing creeds, including the Apostles’ Creed and Nicene Creed, which continue to be used in many churches today. Examining the creeds will help us understand why they were constructed and their relevance. Their relationship to the canonization of the contents of the Bible will also be discussed.

How important are the creeds today? Do they inform the way that faithful people live their lives, or do they distract from daily living? Some churches in our country have reservations about using creeds, while others use them regularly. Why is this? What’s at stake? Should older creeds be replaced by new and different formulations? And more generally, what role do beliefs play in the life of a contemporary Christian?

The course will meet on five Monday evenings from Oct. 17 through Nov. 14, 7:00–9:00p.m. Cost to enroll in this not-for-credit course is \$35. Please call 507-933-7001 for registration information, or find the registration form online at gustavus.edu/church-relations. Space is limited. (Enrollment deadline Oct. 13.)

Fourth Annual SleepOUT at Gustavus A Senior High Youth Event

November 11-12, 2011, 7pm Friday-5pm Saturday

Pastor Grady St. Dennis, director of church relations and college chaplain, and Professor Richard Leitch, associate professor of political science, are collaborating to raise awareness of homelessness and think about what is being and can be done to end hunger and homelessness in our communities. Giving even one night will make a difference!

No cost to participate. Registration deadline is November 7. Participants must check in by 7 p.m. Friday. Call Church Relations in the Center for Servant Leadership at 507-933-7001 to preregister, or e-mail mbeyer@gustavus.edu.

Gustavus Sesquicentennial Clergy Luncheon, Oct. 25, 2011

A Sesquicentennial event for Association of Congregations Clergy and Gustavus Alumni Clergy will be held at noon on Tuesday, October 25, 2011, at St. Barnabas Lutheran Church, 15600 Old Rockford Road, Plymouth, Minnesota.

The Center for Servant Leadership of Gustavus Adolphus College invites metro-area clergy and their spouses or guests to join us for this special event. President Jack R. Ohle will be the featured speaker.

Because space is limited, we ask that you pre-register for the event. The cost of the luncheon is \$5 per person and will be collected at the door. Please phone or e-mail Marilyn Beyer in Church Relations to RSVP with your name and the name of your guest, if you are bringing someone, by Tuesday, October 18, 2011.

**SERVICE AWARD 2011 TO
BE PRESENTED TO THE REV.
GERALD HOFFMAN
ON NOVEMBER 8**



The Reverend Gerald (Jerry) Hoffman '59 of St. Anthony Village, Minnesota, has been selected as the recipient of the 2011 Gustavus Association of Congregations and Alumni Service Award.

Recognized for his vision and leadership in congregations, his most unique contributions are in the field of stewardship education.

“Starting with only hope and a dream from staff and friends of Luther Seminary,” states his nomination, “Jerry envisioned and subsequently developed a multifaceted program to intentionally prepare students of Luther Seminary to become effective and confident stewardship leaders.” The nomination goes on to describe his influence and mentorship of seminarians and faculty colleagues, courses, and workshops developed for seminarians and pastors, and a host of resources made available for use by pastors and seminarians. With a Lilly grant, he also worked to study, learn, and replicate best stewardship practices in congregations.

All eight ELCA seminaries have been influenced by his work at Luther Seminary to prepare seminarians for their roles as stewardship leaders. His work has been replicated at other seminaries. Under his leadership, Luther Seminary’s Center for Stewardship Leadership, which he led for four years, has become a prototype for education of church leaders.

Hoffman served as senior pastor at Nativity Lutheran Church in St. Anthony Village, Minnesota; as a board member and chair of Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota for three years; and as a consultant and clergy coach. Following his undergraduate work at Gustavus, he graduated from Augustana Seminary, Rock Island, Ill.

Hoffman is married to Joan (Miller '61).



Marie Walker, Angelique Dwyer, and Jim Dontje will pilot the Faculty Fellows Program in Community-Based Learning. | Photo by Marilyn Beyer

The Faculty Fellows Program—a new community-based learning initiative at Gustavus

MARILYN BEYER, Assistant Director of Church Relations

The academy and the community have a great deal both to teach and to learn from each other. Faculty are eager to help students build connections between their academic work on campus and the very real world that extends far beyond the boundaries of college life.

The new Faculty Fellows program in Community-Based Learning at Gustavus is a collaborative effort of faculty, students, and community partners to provide students with opportunities for meaningful community engagement, to address community needs and priorities, to build faculty learning communities of scholar-practitioners, and to more deeply integrate community-based learning into the academic programs of the college.

The Center for Servant Leadership is sponsoring the program under the leadership of Jeffrey Rathlef, director for community-based service and learning. The Faculty Fellows initiative has broad and unique possibilities to enrich learning in the classroom and beyond, through research, engagement, and partnership. In individual and group projects, students will work with faculty members and community leaders to inform and advance diverse community-based needs and priorities.

With each community partner, there will be different ways that their needs intersect with students skills.

During the spring of 2012, **Marie Walker** (psychology) will be building on community-based research previously done in her abnormal psychology classes. She will continue to work with two community partners, Patty Pierson of Shiloh’s Hope, Inc., and Barb Christenson of Nicollet County Social Services, in assessing the need for a Crisis Response Team in Nicollet County. Students in Walker’s abnormal psychology class will gather additional information on crisis response teams, including types of crises to be encountered, the area to be served, healthcare and law enforcement professionals who might be assisted, legal issues, and funding possibilities for a mental health crisis response team in Nicollet County.

When in crisis, people with mental health issues may act in unexpected ways. “Currently, we have no crisis response team that serves all of Nicollet County,” said Walker. “The Mental Health Association of Minnesota has many wonderful advocacy resources available, but outside of the metro area, there is less information available to help individuals and their families with mental illness. There are just

fewer resources in rural areas.” The research her students conducted in 2010 indicated that a need exists in the county for short-term mental health care for crisis help or consultation, and that this would be cost effective in reducing the strain both to the primary intervention worker and the families. The recommendation was supported by information from existing crisis response teams in other Minnesota counties: their composition, area covered, types of emergencies they respond to, training of officials, and beneficiaries of the team.

Additional information is needed: How would the public see this service? Interviews will be done with mental health practitioners, law enforcement, and other services that have contact with the population. “Not only do we want to compare the services in our area with what is available in other counties, but learn what is being done nationwide,” said Walker.

“We will also investigate other models for funding, and who would buy into creating this.” Awareness of mental health issues and the need for a crisis team would make it easier to get funding and acceptance for a crisis response team. A community forum might be a place to facilitate discussion and bring learning and the need for structure and support to another level. Ideas continue to emerge as Walker networks with colleagues and community partners.

Walker’s hope is that through this applied area of learning, the multiple aspects of the project will be woven together with community needs in a way that will have an impact, that students will develop confidence and recognize that what they have to offer makes a difference. The students will share their results and conclusions with the organizations and agencies that need the information, as well as with their professors. “I would hope students will have the opportunity to try something, to be a part of something bigger. Maybe they’ll feel empowered with the confidence to organize, and that this will take them on to something new—so they’ll say ‘*Now I know* what I want to do!’”

Angelique Dwyer (Spanish) joined the faculty a year ago with an interest in matching the department’s vision to find a way for her students to interact with the local Latino community in St. Peter. Speakers of Spanish are readily found in most communities, but student involvement would make using the language more relevant. Dwyer envisioned a poetic project bridging culture and literature—such as capturing memoirs of the large Latino community now living in St. Peter, and their personal histories. But in a meeting held with members of the Latino community, it quickly became evident that telling about their cultural experience was not something they needed—what they wanted were ways to learn English language skills targeted to their civic engagement needs: how to help their kids with homework, meeting their kids’ teachers, how to fill out job applications and what to wear to an interview, what to do/not do or say, citizenship lessons, and other basic cultural skills. Gustavus students need opportunities to speak with native speakers of Spanish, to practice speaking and learn transcultural awareness.

Dwyer’s project is called “Language Buddies.” The beauty of the project is that it will be a mutual intercultural exchange, with half the time spent conversing in English and the other half in Spanish, for the benefit of both parties. “This will be wonderful for my students!” said Dwyer. “They will not only have the chance to work on language, but also to understand the culture of these Latinos and their experiences—life in Mexico, crossing the border, their issues, and adjusting to life here in St. Peter.”

Dwyer has sought out a community partner in Jose Corpus, who

works with the Mankato Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU). He will identify Latino families willing to work in their homes with pairs of Gustavus students. Additionally, four native Spanish-speaking students will serve as intercultural mediators.

Dwyer’s Latin American culture and literature courses both focus on historical and present-day contexts and events, cultural influences, and how these factors are relevant. This project will enable mutual sharing, with the families meeting monthly in their homes with the students, and invited as a group to come to campus three times for special cultural events.

While a perfect project in theory, Dwyer feels the biggest challenge may be in bringing the Latino community together and getting them to commit to the project. Although most Latino families live in close proximity to one another, often they are slow to share information, or to commit to relationships with each other and with the wider community. A lack of trust is another challenge this project will face.

James Dontje (environmental studies) will undertake the Fellowship with students in Associate Professor Jeff Jeremiason’s senior seminar course. Students will develop projects, individually and as a group, without the framework of a predetermined project description. The initial project selections will be an important part of the process—where the possibility exists to connect a student’s great passion with the world’s great need. Students will wrestle with skills and continuity to make the projects succeed, and the projects will require teamwork. “Future education at Gustavus will probably involve far more group work than it ever has before,” Dontje said. “The world and the workplace are full of collaborative models.”

Students will learn leadership as they work toward this end, which might ultimately direct them in their post-graduate careers. “Many learn as seniors that they are interested in environmental education,” Dontje said. “They might be asking questions, like how do I match my dream job with what’s possible in the world—and get paid for it?”

While all of the community partners have not yet been named, some projects will almost certainly involve the YES! program with area high school students, which works with teams of area high school students on energy conservation and renewable energy projects. Gustavus students will be providing support to these teams and their coaches. The YES! program will have a kickoff meeting at Gustavus in early November. Other projects might involve connections with a local ecopreneur program, teaching high school students entry skills for sustainable businesses. The community partners will each have a different interest in how they can be helped, and what resources they might tap that different students might be able to offer.

Dontje expects the primary challenge, and the most exciting aspect of the Fellowship, to be the mentoring component both with students and as a faculty development model. More faculty will have contact with the program through community and faculty roundtables. Since environmental studies is an interdisciplinary major, the real outcome will be greater maturity in the students’ areas of study. The community partners will each have different interest in how they can be helped by this, and it may involve the resources brought by the students. The students will define the deliverable outcome for success, or the end point—not always easy to see and define but involving a process that pushes the boundaries of students, many of whom are hard science co-majors, with involvement in social science.

SAVE THE DATE! “CELEBRATING 150 YEARS OF FAITH AT GUSTAVUS”: GACAC CONVENTION 2012 TO BE HELD ON APRIL 21

During our Sesquicentennial year, each celebration is designed to highlight at least one of the five core values that guide Gustavus Adolphus College. As you might imagine, the Association of Congregations gathering on April 21, 2012, will lift up the value of FAITH. Yet, we all know the values that guide Gustavus are deeply intertwined. For example, one central way we have sought to live our value of FAITH has been to be a college COMMUNITY committed to SERVICE and JUSTICE. In this year of celebration, we can think of no better way to celebrate FAITH than to gather together to share in a service-learning event that brings our community together to help others.

The GACAC Convention will end with a shift from 12:30-3pm, when we will join the youth from the Student Leadership Day to pack meals for Feed My Starving Children. This effort will be a part of a larger campus effort that weekend to pack 250,000 meals for hungry children—itsself part of an even larger yearlong effort during the Sesquicentennial year to partner with ELCA congregations and Thrivent Financial for Lutherans to pack 1 million meals for Feed My Starving Children.

We have a marvelous heritage, and during this festive GACAC gathering we will reflect upon and celebrate the gift of 150 years of Gustavus, 50 years of Christ Chapel, and 25 years of the outreach ministries of the GACAC. Please note: Unique to this year will be a different location and format for the GACAC Business Meeting. As a part of our celebrations, GACAC clergy and voting delegates will be treated to breakfast during the 8:30 a.m. business meeting in Alumni Hall.

SCHEDULE

- 8:00 Registration
- 8:30 Breakfast and GACAC business meeting
- 10:15 Worship in Christ Chapel. Homilist: Reverend Richard Elvee
- 11:00 Keynote address: Bishop Mark Hanson
- Noon Bag lunch
- 12:30 Service-Learning Event: Mobile Food Pack with Feed My Starving Children
- 3:00 Closing Reception



Gustavus welcomes youth and adults from congregations to campus and has a number of resources available to share with congregations. | Photos by Marilyn Beyer

Resources available for your congregational ministry

How can Gustavus resources help your congregation in 2011-2012? We have a wealth of resources available to our Association member congregations, and we want to serve you!

Listed below are many of the returning signature programs from Church Relations in the Center for Servant Leadership. Some congregations use multiple resources every year; others use fewer, or as needed. Some of these ongoing, very affordable programs are listed below:

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, 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 variety of topics during Sunday morning forums in Association churches. 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-ins or retreat settings. Congregation must cover mileage expenses, meals if applicable, cost of supplies or special materials, and housing if needed. A love offering to GYO is appreciated.

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 book any of these programs, contact Marilyn in Church Relations, Center for Servant Leadership, at 507-933-7001.



Adults in many congregations seek deeper study and a broader learning experience, in a more sustained study format with opportunity for discussion. | Photo by Marilyn Beyer

Dr. Jodock continues

The last issue of *The Spire* announced Darrell Jodock's retirement on August 31. The search for his successor continues, so he will remain at the College during 2011, carrying forward some of the Bernhardson Chair work on the College's Lutheran identity. His duties will include organizing and co-teaching Exploring Religious Questions courses, work with Pastor-2-Pastor, and work with Partners in Education. He will also continue to give attention to his Templeton project on science and theology.

A lay school approach to adult education might be right for your congregation

DR. DARRELL JODOCK, Professor emeritus, Gustavus Adolphus College

For a number of years, the Partners in Education program has made available Gustavus faculty for Sunday adult forums. Many congregations have found this to be a valuable educational resource. A 50-minute adult forum works well for some topics. But other subjects benefit from more sustained attention. The purpose of this article is to encourage congregations to consider alternative patterns that permit a deeper or broader educational experience.

One such pattern is a workshop or a "lay school of religion" that brings a single speaker for three or four presentations, with extra time for questions and discussion. Each of these sessions typically involves a 45-minute presentation plus 30 minutes for discussion. It is possible, for example, to have one session Friday evening and two on Saturday morning, or one on Sunday morning and two on Sunday afternoon. Such a series could explore the main themes in Luther's thought, or a book in the Bible, or Christian ethics and American politics, or many other topics.

A lay school works well with multiple congregations. Last year, ten Lutheran churches in the northwestern suburbs of Minneapolis organized such a combined event, which was held in early January. They are planning another for this year. A lay school can also be an ecumenical experience, co-sponsored, for example, by a Presbyterian, a Methodist, an

Episcopal, and another Lutheran congregation. Where possible, it can also be inter-religious, co-sponsored by a synagogue or a mosque and a church.

Another potential pattern is a series of presentations, each done by a different person. Thus, for example, there might be four-part series on science and religion, with a theologian speaking first, then a physicist, then a biologist, and then the theologian. These presenters could come to a single workshop, or the series could be spread over several days or weeks. Another four-part series could focus on interpreting the Bible and involve a historical introduction on the formation of the Bible, a session on interpreting the Old Testament, another on interpreting the New Testament, and a theological presentation on the role of the Bible in the church. A registration fee can help fund one of these projects.

These are only examples. We invite you to think of possible topics and formats, and then explore your ideas with someone from Gustavus who can help design and staff the program. Church Relations in the Center for Servant Leadership will put you in touch with the right person.

Topics abound for adult education!

Presentations for adult forums, youth and adult education classes, workshops and seminars are available through the Gustavus Partners in Education program. Many presentation topic summaries are listed in our membership handbook, which can be found online. Not an exhaustive list, we have even more to choose from, and will work to the right one for your congregation!

Here are a few topic ideas in addition to those found in the handbook:

"Biblical interpretation in the Reformation." How did biblical interpretation change during the Reformation? What might the reformers have to teach us about faithfully reading the Bible today?"

"The authority of the Bible." *Sola scriptura* was one of the Reformation's enduring slogans. But what does it mean? The function of biblical authority in the modern world.

"Conversion and evangelism in a religiously diverse world." What does faithful evangelism look like in a world of many faiths? Can Christians both proclaim the gospel and respect other faith traditions?

"Not-for-Prophet?" The role of prophesy in the history of our faith.

A new *Association of Congregations Membership Handbook* will soon be available for 2012-2015.



Center for Servant Leadership, 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!

Not a member of the Association of Congregations but interested in joining? Contact the Office of Church Relations.

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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 Retreats Program

507-933-7001
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Partners Programs

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