

Mission Vision Forward

18

INAUGURATION OF **JOHN C. VOLIN, PhD**
GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE'S 18TH PRESIDENT

Friday, April 17, 2026 | 2 p.m. | Christ Chapel



Prelude

Processional Introduction

Gloria from Mass in C major, op. 86

Ludwig van Beethoven

Processional Hymn

For the Splendor of Creation



1. For the splen - dor of cre - a - tion that draws us to in - quire,
2. For the schol - ars past and pres - ent whose boun - ty we di - gest,
3. For the heal - ing of the na - tions, for peace that will not end,



for the mys - ter - ies of knowl - edge to which our hearts as - pire,
for the teach - ers who in - spire us to sum - mon forth our best,
for the love that joins all peo - ple, God grant us grace to mend.



for the deep and sub - tle beau - ties which de - light the eye and ear,
for our ri - vals and com - pan - ions, some - times fool - ish, some - times wise,
Weave our var - ied gifts to - geth - er; knit our lives as they are spun;



for the dis - ci - pline of log - ic, the strug - gle to be clear,
for the hu - man web up - hold - ing this no - ble en - ter - prise,
on your loom of time en - roll us till our thread of life is run.



for the un - ex - plained re - main - der, the puz - zling and the odd:
for the com - mon life that binds us through days that soar or plod:
O great weav - er of our fab - ric, bind all the world as one;



for the joy and pain of learn - ing, we give you thanks, O God.
for this place and for these peo - ple, we give you thanks, O God.
for the bless - ings of each oth - er, we give you thanks, O God.

Invocation

The Rev. Dr. Grady St. Dennis '92

Scripture Reading

The Rev. Laura Aase

Acts 2:1–12

Greetings

Suzanne Boda '82, *representing the Board of Trustees*

Dr. Joshua Brown and Dr. Lucie Holmgreen, *representing the faculty*

Gwen Walz '88, *representing the State of Minnesota and Gustavus alumni*

Inauguration Address

Dr. Domenico Grasso

Musical Anthem

Salutation

Music by Ēriks Ešenvalds
Text by Rabindranath Tagore

Presentation of the President

Chair Boda

Rite of Installation and Charges

Bishop Dee Pederson

Gustavus Faculty Representative: Dr. Sarah Ruble

Gustavus Staff Representative: Dr. Charlie Potts '01

Student & Alumni Representatives: Laura Sunnarborg '27 and Micah Lesch '26

Saint Peter–Mankato Community Representative: Monsignor Douglas Grams

Responses

Faculty Response

As seekers, creators, and sharers of knowledge, it is your responsibility to engage in scholarship in pursuit of truth and meaning, valuing humanity and seeking to support your students for the fulfillment of their potential as lifelong learners who lead lives of purpose.

Will you now reaffirm your commitment to the role of teacher, scholar, and steward of the liberal arts tradition?

If so, answer “Yes, I will.”

(Faculty responds) **Yes, I will.**

Staff Response

As servant leaders who live out the mission and values of the College, it is your responsibility to support the development of our students as whole persons, to help build a community of belonging, and to champion interdisciplinary and interdepartmental problem solving.

Will you, as staff, as a community of persons from various backgrounds each serving in significant ways, reaffirm your personal commitments to your roles in this community?

If so, answer “Yes, I will.”

(Staff responds) Yes, I will.

Students and Alumni Response

You are the fulfillment of the College’s mission and the promise of the future. You have chosen to learn together as Gustavus students, and to carry the lessons of Excellence, Community, Justice, Service, and Faith into the world to serve in your own communities.

Will you, as current and former students, now reaffirm your commitment to Gustavus Adolphus College, and offer your support for all who will follow in your footsteps?

If so, answer “Yes, I will.”

(Students and Alumni respond) Yes, I will.

Greater Community Response

Those who live and work beyond the footprint of this campus, here in Saint Peter, across the great state of Minnesota, and around the world, you are connected always with the Gustavus community in a partnership of purpose, committed to the pursuit of knowledge and the ethical application of learning to improve the human condition and to love the neighbor. Will all those gathered on behalf of the greater community now reaffirm our continued commitment to the values and objectives of higher education, offering our time, energy, prayers and support? If so, answer “Yes, I will.”

(All respond) Yes, I will.

Presentation of the Insignia of Office and Introduction of the President

Chair Boda

Presidential Address

Dr. John C. Volin

Prayers of Intercession

The Rev. Benjamin Hilding '09
and Gustavus students

Benediction

The Rev. Alicia Hilding '08

Recessional

O God Our Help in Ages Past



1. O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,
2. Un - der the shad - ow of your throne your saints have dwelt se - cure;
3. Be - fore the hills in or - der stood or earth re - ceived its frame,
4. A thou - sand a - ges in your sight are like an eve - ning gone,
5. Time, like an ev - er roll - ing stream, bears all our years a - way;
6. O God, our help in a - ges past, our hope for years to come,



our shel - ter from the storm - y blast, and our e - ter - nal home:
suf - fi - cient is your arm a - lone, and our de - fense is sure.
from ev - er - last - ing you are God, to end - less years the same.
short as the watch that ends the night be - fore the ris - ing sun.
they fly for - got - ten, as a dream dies at the op' - ning day.
still be our guard while trou - bles last and our e ter nal home.

Postlude

Toccata from Symphony No. 5 for organ

Charles Marie-Widor

Luna Moth Matrix (Prelude for Renewal)

Steve Heitzeg '82

Christ Chapel Carillon Commission

A new piece for the Christ Chapel carillon was commissioned in honor of the inauguration of John C. Volin as the 18th President. *Luna Moth Matrix (Prelude for Renewal)* was written by Steve Heitzeg '82 with funding generously provided by the Class of 1954 Carillon Bells Endowment Fund. The piece was inspired by the Paul Granlund sculpture, Luna Moth Matrix, on the east side of Christ Chapel.



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Service Participants

Inauguration Address

Dr. Domenico Grasso, *President of the University of Michigan*

Reading

The Rev. Laura Aase, *Assistant Director of the Continuous Growth Pathway*

Prayers

The Rev. Dr. Grady St. Dennis '92, *Executive Chaplain and Associate Vice President of Mission*

The Rev. Alicia Hilding '08, *Dean of Christ Chapel and Chaplain of the College*

The Rev. Benjamin Hilding '09, *Dean of Christ Chapel and Chaplain of the College*

Christopher Alvarado-Salazar '28, Erin Grube '27, Madalena Rocio Gora '28, Eleanor Habben '26,
Grace LaTourelle '27, Lupe Olague '26, Sam Paulsen '29, and Soren Sackreiter '26

Greetings

Suzanne Boda '82, *Chair of the Board of Trustees*

Dr. Joshua Brown, *Associate Professor of Philosophy, Faculty Senate Co-Chair*

Dr. Lucie Holmgreen, *Associate Professor of Psychological Science, Faculty Senate Co-Chair*

Gwen Walz '88, *First Lady of Minnesota*

Rite of Installation and Charges

Bishop Dee Pederson, *Southwestern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA*

Dr. Sarah Ruble, *Professor of Religion*

Dr. Charlie Potts '01, *Vice Provost for Student Life and Dean of Students*

Laura Sunnarborg '27 and Micah Lesch '26, *Student Senate Co-Presidents*

Monsignor Douglas Grams, *Church of Saint Peter*

Musicians

Organist and Carillonneur, Dr. Chad Winterfeldt, *Cantor of Christ Chapel*

Gustavus Choir, Dr. Brandon Dean, *conductor*

Choir of Christ Chapel and Lucia Singers, Dr. Andrew Kendall '15, *conductor*

Gustavus Symphony Orchestra, Dr. Justin Knoepfel, *conductor*

Brass Ensemble

Hudson Nichols '26, *trumpet and conductor*

Landon Schlangen '29, *trumpet*

Zach Sullivan '26, *trumpet*

Conor Jolly '26, *horn*

Drew Lyford '27, *euphonium*

Zach Mangan '26, *bass trombone*

John C. Volin, PhD

18th President of Gustavus Adolphus College



John C. Volin, PhD, is the 18th President of Gustavus Adolphus College. His leadership at the College is focused on elevating the contemporary impact of the liberal arts and implementing evidence-based practices that support holistic student wellbeing.

An educational reformer who champions the integration of curricular learning, experiential education, and ethical reflection, Volin is committed to the idea that higher education should serve the common good beyond the traditional undergraduate population through strong partnerships and lifelong learning opportunities for youth, alumni, and the community at large.

Dr. Volin is a co-founder and senior advisor of *LearningWell Magazine* and serves on the Executive Committee of the LearningWell Coalition, where he works to integrate student wellbeing and academic success into institutional frameworks.

Before joining Gustavus, Volin served as the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost at the University of Maine. His previous administrative experience includes serving as Vice Provost of Academic Affairs at the University of Connecticut and directing the Environmental Sciences graduate program at Florida Atlantic University.

A native of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Volin earned his BS in botany and biology and an MS in agronomy from South Dakota State University. He holds a PhD in forestry from the University of Wisconsin–Madison, where he also completed a postdoctoral fellowship in plant physiological ecology. Volin and his wife, Valeria, have five children and six grandchildren. He lives on the Gustavus campus with Valeria and their dog, a golden retriever named Sofia.

Dr. Domenico Grasso, PhD, is president of the University of Michigan and serves as professor of civil and environmental engineering at UM–Ann Arbor and as public policy and administration and professor of sustainable engineering at UM–Dearborn. Grasso is widely admired for his visionary work leading the University of Michigan–Dearborn, where he held the role of chancellor from 2018–2025. As an environmental engineer, his research focuses on molecular scale processes that govern the ultimate fate of contaminants in the environment and development of new techniques to reduce risks to human health and natural resources.



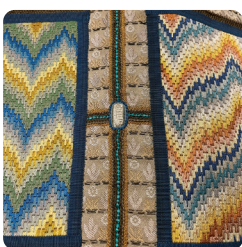
Presidential Medallion

The Presidential Medallion was created in 1981 by the late Paul T. Granlund '52, sculptor-in-residence at Gustavus for 25 years. In Granlund's words, "The insigne merges and folds the images of ancient crosses, recalling our Christian heritage, with the petal forms of the Lutheran rose. The Christ Chapel cross penetrates the center of the insigne."



Ceremonial Mace

The Gustavus Adolphus College ceremonial mace was formed by making a mold of a walking stick originally carved by Eric Norelius, the founder and first president of the College. The mace was produced by Greg Mueller, who served as the College's Sequicentennial sculptor in 2012. Mueller explains that "the College seal and three crowns image are featured on opposite sides of the disk near the top, while the College's core values act as roots for the mace: Excellence, Community, Justice, Service, and Faith."



Altar Cloth and Parament

The altar cloth was designed and needlepointed by King Gustaf V of Sweden, who was an avid needlepointer and is the great grandfather of the current king. The altar cloth was originally given to Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Brooklyn, New York in 1948 and in 2012 the cloth was gifted to Gustavus.



The parament set was commissioned in honor of the inauguration of John C. Volin as the 18th President. The artist, The Rev. Melinda Halom (parent of Dylan Halom '27), visually depicts the colors and movement of the Pentecost story.

Presidential Search Committee

Chair Suzanne Boda '82, Trustee
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Sarah Cuthill '85, MA, Trustee
Tane Danger '07, MPP, Trustee
John Harris '92, PhD, Trustee
Mary Dee Hicks '75, PhD, Trustee
David Kogler '01, MA, Staff

Sun Hee Lee, PhD, Faculty
The Rev. David Lose, PhD, Trustee
Kathy Lund Dean, PhD, Faculty
Lupe Olague '26, Student
Jacob Siehler, PhD, Faculty
Deb Swanberg, Staff
JJ Akin '11, search coordinator

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Robert Schnell '81
Karl Self '81, MBA, DDS
The Rev. Amanda Simons '06
Kent Stone '80, MBA
The Rev. Heather Teune Wigdahl '95



Presidents of Gustavus Adolphus College

The Rev. Eric Norelius, 1862–1863
The Rev. Andrew Jackson, 1863–1873, 1874–1876
John J. Frodeen, 1873–1874
The Rev. Jonas P. Nyquist, 1876–1881
The Rev. Matthias Wahlstrom, 1882–1904
The Rev. Peter A. Mattson '92, PhD, 1904–1911
Jacob Uhler, PhD (acting president), 1911–1913
The Rev. Oscar J. Johnson, 1913–1942
The Rev. Walter Lunden '22, PhD, 1942–1943
The Rev. O.A. Winfield (acting president), 1943–1944
The Rev. Edgar M. Carlson '30, PhD, 1944–1968
Albert Swanson, PhD (acting president), 1968–1969
Frank Barth, MBA, 1969–1975
The Rev. Abner W. Arthur '31, PhD (acting president), Summer 1975
Edward A. Lindell, EdD, 1975–1980
The Rev. Abner W. Arthur '31, PhD (acting president), 1980–1981
The Rev. John S. Kendall '49, PhD, 1981–1991
Axel D. Steuer, PhD, 1991–2002
The Rev. Dennis J. Johnson '60, LHD (hon.), 2002–2003
James L. Peterson '64, PhD, 2003–2008
Jack R. Ohle, DD (hon.), DLitt (hon.), 2008–2014
Rebecca M. Bergman, EngD (hon.), LHD (hon.), 2014–2025
John C. Volin, PhD, 2025–

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