



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.

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## Mark Your Calendars

***Nobel Conference 50: Where Does Science Go from Here?***

October 7 & 8, 2014

Celebrating 50 years of the Nobel Conference

## 2014 GACAC Business Meeting and Faith Conference

SARA MASTERS, Assistant Director for Church Relations, Center for Servant Leadership

27th Annual Association of Congregations Business Meeting to be held Saturday, April 26

From the beginning of the Reformation to today, the Lutheran Church has embraced a wide range of significant commitments to children and their well-being. Martin Luther wrote his famous Small Catechism to help parents bring up children in the faith, and Lutheran churches today engage parents in their youth and family ministry programs. In addition, Luther attended to the needs of orphans and the poor, laying the foundation for the vast network of orphanages, hospitals, schools, colleges, and social service agencies established by Lutherans in the past and around the world today.

In his reflections on the priesthood of all believers and vocation, Luther underscored the duties and responsibilities not only of adults to children but also of children to adults. Lutheran congregations and colleges continue to recognize the gifts and talents of children and young people, by seeing that they are also called to love and serve others and contribute to the common good not just in the future, but now.

In light of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and the urgent needs of children today, the 2014 Gustavus Faith Conference aims to deepen our understanding of Lutheranism's rich heritage regarding children and to renew and revitalize our own commitments to children and young people in our midst and around the world.



This year's keynote speaker, Dr. Marcia J. Bunge, Bernhardson Distinguished Chair of Lutheran Studies and professor of religion at Gustavus Adolphus College, will provide both the theological grounding for and

concrete examples of Lutheran commitments to children in her address, "Understanding Lutheran Commitments to Children and Youth: Theological Foundations, Historical Perspectives, and Contemporary Initiatives." Over the past few years, Bunge has spoken and published widely on various religious perspectives on children and obligations to them, editing or co-editing and contributing to four foundational volumes on the subject.

A panel of speakers in the afternoon will reflect more deeply on the grounds for our commitments and our responsibilities to children today in the areas of child advocacy and faith formation. Panelists include Jodi Harpstead, CEO of Lutheran Social Service; Daniel Lee, vice president of external relations, Lutheran World Relief; the Rev. Jeremy Myers, associate professor for youth and family ministry, Augsburg College; and Tim Schmidt, managing partner, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

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Adolphus College  
Mount Olivet Lutheran Church  
Minneapolis, Minn.

**Sara Masters, *Ex-officio***

Assistant Director for Church  
Relations, Center for Servant  
Leadership, Gustavus  
Adolphus College  
Immanuel Lutheran Church  
Eden Prairie, Minn.

## From the Director

PASTOR GRADY ST. DENNIS, Director for Church Relations



God's blessings to you from the Center for Servant Leadership at Gustavus. With the start of the new academic year well under way the excitement on campus is high! We have a number of wonderful additions to

our campus community this fall with Chaplains Siri Erickson and Brian Konkol beginning their ministry at Gustavus and Sara Masters joining our Center for Servant Leadership team, working with me as the assistant director for Church Relations.

I am sure in your part of the vineyard the energy levels are high as well with the fullness of the new church year unfolding. There are exciting and historic changes in store for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America with the installation of the Rev. Elizabeth Eaton as presiding bishop, the first woman to serve our church in this role. It was a thrill to be at Rockefeller Memorial Chapel in Chicago to join hearts in grateful celebration for this historic moment in our church life together.

The gospel reading from the Installation service was from Mark 4:1-9, Jesus's parable of the seed

sower. This parable is a powerful message. It is a word of encouragement to keep sowing the seeds of God's love with a spirit of generosity. It is a reminder to consider what sort of context our lifestyle sets for receiving the word of God. What are the soil conditions like in our community? It is a call to engage God's word of grace in Christ and live in that word, bearing the fruits of the spirit in our daily living.

Often I find myself using the image of the vineyard when I talk of the outreach work I am a part of through the Center for Servant Leadership. As I interact with leaders across our Church and college systems and move about the campuses, synods, and congregations, I have an ever growing sense of the big vineyard within which we are all laboring. It inspires me in my part of the effort. Indeed, God is good! The Church Relations outreach at Gustavus exists 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. Thank you for the ways in which you have been mindful of and active in the life and growth of Gustavus. My prayer is that this coming year will be one that draws us closer in our work together.

## A New Face in the Church Relations Office



This past spring, Marilyn Beyer retired from her position of assistant director of Church Relations. A search ensued to find a new person to take over this very important role. In July, Sara Masters was hired. She officially

started at Gustavus on August 1. Many of you have already talked to her or e-mailed with her. She comes to us from the Minneapolis Area Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). In the synod office, her role was the director of communications

where she managed the synod's internal and external communications, including public relations and bishop communications. Prior to the synod, she was at RSM McGladrey as a Web content specialist in national marketing; communications manager at Colonial Church of Edina; and at Thrivent Financial for Lutherans in many different communications roles. She has more than 15 years of experience in the communications industry.

Masters grew up in Minneapolis and attended Augsburg College, where she studied mathematics. She also has her master's degree in leadership from Augsburg. She lives in Shakopee with her husband, Jason, and 8-year-old daughter, Maren.



New chaplains Siri Erickson and Brian Konkol, up close (left) and on the job.

## New Chaplains Commit to Deepening and Expanding Daily Worship

Gustavus Adolphus College announced on July 1 that the Reverend Siri C. Erickson and the Reverend Brian E. Konkol had been hired to serve as Chaplains of the College. The two officially joined the college community on August 1 and are carefully discerning how the College will practice daily worship during the scheduled 10–10:20 a.m. chapel time beginning this Fall Semester.

“We understand the challenges that arise out of the changes in leadership, and we will do our best to listen, learn, and grow into our new roles with the utmost levels of appreciation and sensitivity,” Chaplain Konkol said. “We are deeply honored to follow in the footsteps of a long line of faithful chaplains at Gustavus, and we intend to build upon their numerous contributions.”

Chaplains Erickson and Konkol recently changed the name of daily worship at Gustavus from Daily Chapel to Daily Sabbath. They maintain that the transition is intended to deepen our Lutheran roots and expand our contextual reach as a diverse community that gathers together for a period of rest, renewal, and revitalization.

“We hope that the name change brings a renewed focus to the practice of Daily Sabbath. We are confident that people of various theological perspectives will feel included, and we believe it will inspire an increased level of dialogue surrounding the future of faith and learning at Gustavus,” Chaplains Erickson and Konkol said.

Students, faculty, and staff will notice two major changes in the format of Daily Sabbath. The first

is that each day of the week will have a clearly defined focus and each day will feature a distinct experience that relates to an aspect of Sabbath practice. Mondays will be a day of prayer. Tuesdays will feature a speaker who will address a faith-related question and spark discussion about important issues and ideas. Wednesdays will be a continuation of the longstanding tradition of Morning Praise liturgy. Thursdays will feature Christian praise worship led by the Re:vive team and student, faculty, and staff preachers. Fridays will feature a playful approach, reminding attendees to make room for joy and delight in the midst of the challenges of life.

“The second major change is that we are embracing the whole campus as a sacred space,” Chaplain Erickson said. “In particular, on Mondays and Fridays we will invite people to engage in Sabbath practices in Christ Chapel and beyond, such as online, in the Campus Center, and in a variety of locations around campus. Christ Chapel is the symbolic center of faith on campus, but God’s presence can be known anywhere on campus. We want to help people make the connection between faith, learning, and life by hosting Sabbath practices in a wide range of locations.”

Chaplains Erickson and Konkol say that the new format for Daily Sabbath will be in effect for the fall semester, and that they intend to re-evaluate the format after hearing from a variety of students, faculty, staff, alumni, administrators, and others in the Gustavus community.

## HOLY WISDOM, HOLY WORD: CHRISTMAS IN CHRIST CHAPEL, 2013

For 41 years, Gustavus student-musicians and faculty have brought the joy of Christmas and Advent to audiences in Christ Chapel on the first weekend in December. The theme of this year’s Christmas in Christ Chapel celebration of the birth of Christ is “Holy Wisdom, Holy Word: The Gates of Eden Are Open.” More than 350 gifted students, their conductors, and other members of the College community celebrate the holiday season with families, alumni, and friends who come “home” for Christmas in Christ Chapel on December 6 at 7:30 p.m., and December 7 and 8 at 3:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Tickets for the 2013 Christmas in Christ Chapel service are \$25 each, and tickets for the fantastic traditional Christmas buffet are likewise \$25 each. Tickets are available online at [gustavustickets.com](http://gustavustickets.com). If you do not have access to the Internet, please call 507-933-7520 to place your credit card order.





## TRAVEL WITH GUSTAVUS— EXPLORING LUTHER’S REFORMATION AND THE NAZI HOLOCAUST



Journey on an educational tour of Germany and Poland with Gustavus professor emeritus of Religion Rev. Dr. Darrell Jodock from October 4 to 16, 2014. The first focus of

the trip is on the life and teachings of Martin Luther, along with the ongoing significance of his theology. The year 2017 will mark the 500th anniversary of his 95 Theses. Luther was seeking an academic debate, but the document had an unexpected result. Visit sites associated with Luther’s life and examine together Luther’s ideas and their ongoing significance.

The second focus is on the tragedy of the Nazi holocaust and the lessons to be learned. Next year marks the 69th anniversary of the defeat of the Nazis and their efforts to rid Europe of “undesirables”— especially Jews, Gypsies, and Slavs—as well as religious and political opponents. Visit sites in Krakow and Berlin associated with the holocaust.

For more information and to register, visit [gustavus.edu/president/tours](http://gustavus.edu/president/tours).



Gustavus welcomes youth and adults from congregations for a retreat experience at Gustavus and offers GYO & Partners to visit congregations.

## Resources For Your Congregational Ministry

How can Gustavus resources help your congregation in 2013-14?

We have a wealth of resources available to our Association member congregations, and we want to serve you!

Listed below are many of the continuing signature programs from Church Relations in the Center for Servant Leadership. Some congregations use multiple resources every year; others use fewer, or as needed. Many 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**—more than 30 faculty and staff are available to make presentations on a 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 and also honoraria for subsequent presentations.

**Partners in Music**—Student vocal and instrumental musical ensembles are 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. 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.

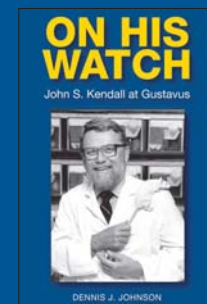
Since the above is not an exhaustive list, please review the full list of resources at any time in our Association Member Handbook, which can be found online at [gustavus.edu/churchrelations](http://gustavus.edu/churchrelations). To request booking any of these programs, contact Sara Masters in Church Relations, Center for Servant Leadership, at 507-933-7001.



## BIOGRAPHY OF THE REV. DR. JOHN KENDALL

Twenty-five years ago, the first GACAC convention was held. To have an association of congregations that would keep the Church and the College close was the brain child of the Rev. Dr. John S. Kendall '49, who served as the twelfth president of Gustavus (1981–1991).

Now, the Rev. Dennis Johnson '60, the person the College initially called to implement and direct the GACAC, has written a biography of Kendall,



titled *On His Watch: John S. Kendall at Gustavus*. It is a record of Kendall as an ordained professor of psychology and later president. This book tells of his rise through the academic

ranks to lead one of America's best colleges. It is about his preparation for the office and his hopes once he occupied it. It is about passion, purpose, heart, and the humor necessary to navigate the challenges. It is also about issues still at the core of church-related higher education today. It explores how Kendall's faith and churchmanship shaped his leadership style, particularly how he saw his vocational calling, his ability to bridge faith and science, his generosity of spirit, his commitment to Christ Chapel and worship as the heart and soul of the College, and his determination that the College resources be in the service of the Church.

This book will interest all who believe in the value of Church and College being in a dynamic partnership.

To that end, the writer also included the Rev. Dr. Edgar M. Carlson's address on higher education that he delivered at Kendall's inaugural and which Kendall had distributed to every congregation of the GACAC. That address by former president Carlson gets at the very heart of why we should care about colleges like Gustavus and why we want to make sure that the Church remains foundational to the College.

## New Church Relations Endowment Announced

by Denise Floe

The Association of Congregations has passed a milestone—25 years of connecting the College and congregations!

In 25 years, there have been 25 annual conventions, filled with voices raised in song during worship, inspiring speakers, informative workshops, and renewed person-to-person relationships. In 25 years, there have been hundreds of middle school students on campus for confirmation retreats. In 25 years, congregations across the Midwest and beyond have been filled with music from the Gustavus choir, band, or orchestra. In 25 years, numerous faculty members have visited congregations, sharing the latest insights from their academic field. Perhaps most important, Gustavus students have had a chance to be part of a faith community as they journey through some of their most formative years. In 25 years, new partnerships, new programs, and new relationships have been created, as blessings to both congregations and the College.

All this connecting takes intentionality, imagination, and dedicated hearts, hands, and feet! The staff in Church Relations and the Director for Church Relations serve as critical links in building and nurturing relationships between people and between congregations and the College. For this reason, the Association of Congregations has launched a new effort to endow the position of the Director for Church Relations. The endowment recognizes the value of this role, as a blessing to both the College and to congregations.

A donation to the Director for Church Relations Endowment Fund is a gift that lasts beyond a lifetime. **Every Gift Counts**—by putting our gifts together we can establish and grow the endowment, helping secure the future of Church Relations at Gustavus Adolphus College.

For those who contribute to an endowment, it's a chance to affirm a value, in this context the value of the Church-College partnership and the value of engaging in conversations about faith as part of the liberal arts experience. One of the blessings of this endowment is the flexibility it offers for the next 25 years and beyond. In the past 25 years, Dennis Johnson, Craig Johnson, Jack Niemi, and Grady St. Dennis have been watchful and creative, always asking "what are the current opportunities and needs, hopes and dreams?" And, "how can this partnership be a blessing, in this time and place?" Giving a gift to the endowment is a chance to live out a current value and to give a future blessing. It is a gift, given forward. It's a gift to build relationships, now and in the future, and to reach out for new opportunities, dreams, hopes, and possibilities.

**For more information on the Director for Church Relations Endowment Fund** and how to make a gift please contact Grady St. Dennis as [stdennis@gustavus.edu](mailto:stdennis@gustavus.edu), 507-933-7661; or Jim Rothschiller at [jrothsch@gustavus.edu](mailto:jrothsch@gustavus.edu), 952-686-8255.



## Center for Servant Leadership, Church Relations

507-933-7001 | Toll-free 800-726-6194 | [gustavus.edu/churchrelations](http://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 Center for Servant Leadership-Church Relations.

#### The Rev. Grady St. Dennis '92

Director for Church Relations and  
College Chaplain  
507-933-7661 | [stdennis@gustavus.edu](mailto:stdennis@gustavus.edu)

#### Sara Masters

Assistant Director for Church Relations  
507-933-7001 | [smasters@gustavus.edu](mailto:smasters@gustavus.edu)

#### Student Intern

507-933-7073  
[church-relations@gustavus.edu](mailto:church-relations@gustavus.edu)

Fax 507-933-6337

#### Confirmation Retreats Program

507-933-7023  
[confirmation-retreats@gustavus.edu](mailto:confirmation-retreats@gustavus.edu)

#### Gustavus Youth Outreach (GYO)

507-933-7585  
[youthoutreach@gustavus.edu](mailto:youthoutreach@gustavus.edu)

#### Adult Retreat Programs

507-933-7001  
[retreat-center@gustavus.edu](mailto:retreat-center@gustavus.edu)

#### Partners Programs

507-933-7001  
[church-relations@gustavus.edu](mailto:church-relations@gustavus.edu)

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