

FAITH AND SCIENCE IN LIFE : THE RHETICUS CONVERSATIONS

by Tim Marty, retired science faculty UIUC, new member of the Rheticus Task Force

It is fitting that St. Andrews resides just across street from the University of Illinois; an institution dedicated to faith, grace, and Christian service sitting in the shadow of a much bigger institution dedicated to exploration of science, reason, and knowledge. For throughout modern history one of the enduring questions debated in western societies has been, "Can faith and science (reason) coexist?" *The Rheticus Conversations explore that question respectfully, honestly, openly.* Three years ago I retired after 27 years of service in the Dept. of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences in the College of ACES. I now spend my time involved with volunteer activities at Grace Lutheran Church, where I am a member, as well as with local bike organizations. My wife, Ann, is a family physician with Carle, one of my sons is an Assistant Professor of Chemistry at the University of Arizona, so conversations about faith and science are a staple in our household.



At the April CU People's March for Science: St. Andrew's members Josh Richardson, Brian Gibbons and Lisa Pogue (scientists all!)

DEPARTURES, GRADUATES, ALUM VISITS



Tim and Dan Vander Ploeg moved Vancouver, Washington. Tim is a school nurse the Washington School for the Deaf; Dan works remotely for the for the UI's Skype For Business telecommunications system.



Sarah Curtiss (with son Doug) earned her PhD in Human Development and Family Studies, will post-doc at both Michigan State U and Ireland!



Steve and Esther Portnoy moved to Hillsboro, Oregon nearer their children and grandchildren.



Matthew Littig earned his BA (major: Economics and Global Studies) and hopes eventually to pursue a career in politics, meanwhile working for Amazon.com in Seattle, WA .



PhD alum, Dr. Sergio Wals, made St. Andrews a stop on his family vacation last July. He is a political science professor in Nebraska.



El Lower earned an MS in Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences and plans to move to Detroit to work in environmental management at the end of the summer



David Naber earned his BA in December (major: Computer Science, Art + Design, Cinema Studies) and is currently employed as Program Manager at Microsoft in Seattle, WA.



PhD alum Dr. Kenneth Cox from Texas, met his wife (now deceased) here at St. Andrews. He stopped in for a visit last summer. (Pictured with Pastor Amy.)



Kristin Sarvela earned her Doctor of Musical Arts in Oboe, and will teach at the University of Illinois, Springfield.

Summer
2017



ST ANDREW'S

LUTHERAN CHURCH AND CAMPUS CENTER

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Our Eco-Reformation Heritage Garden in Honor of Katie Luther



This May, we received a gift from retired ELCA pastor Jeff Wild in honor of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation: the materials and instructions for an herb garden bed. Martin Luther's wife Katharina was a skilled herbalist, so we installed the garden in her honor, out on our front lawn for everyone to enjoy. Made with repurposed wood, the garden includes herbs as well as native Illinois plants to attract pollinators so important to this part of the world. #ecoReformation

"a community I can rely on and contribute to ..." By Sofia Garfias-Yi, Communications and Sociology, Art and Design; class of 2018

When I first came to St. Andrew's as a freshman, I was surprised at the student involvement here, since I had never been to a campus ministry. The fact that the council president at that time, Erik Kountz, was only one year older than me was pretty awesome. Back at home, my parents and I had moved churches a couple of times, and I often never had the chance to build deeper relationships with people. However, St. Andrew's has become a community I can rely on and contribute to, which makes me very thankful. This past year, serving as the council President gave me the chance to work together with the council members in the planning of events and discussing the future of the church. St. Andrew's has the possibility to make an impact just because it is on the University campus. Students often stop going to church once they get to college. However, I think St. Andrew's has provided a safe and loving community for anyone that wants to stop by for some good conversation, worship, or food—and I hope it can keep doing that in the future.



Board of Trustees:

William Adams, Rev. Ray Bowers, Melissa Idleman, president, Rev. Maggie Falenschek, Rev. Peter Hinrich, Tiana Montgomery, treasurer, Bruce Rhoads.

Staff:

Pastor: Amy C. Thoren | Music Director: Martha Alwes | Office Administrator: Rachel Rasmussen

Thank you for keeping the faith with today's students!

University students inspire incredible hope for the church and the world. With students, we are visioning and setting faithful and courageous goals for St. Andrew's; goals we believe will make our ministry even more effective and sustainable into God's future.

We ask that you prayerfully consider partnering with us with a financial gift and with the ongoing gift of prayer. You may use the enclosed form or give online at www.lutherancampuscenter.org.

Dear friends, sisters and brothers in Christ,

I seem to always write this newsletter piece when students are hunkered down with final exams and campus is dead as a door-knob. It is reflective time, as I consider our ministry in the past year, and it is discerning time, as I consider where God is leading us from this day forth.

The community at St. Andrew's is changing, as all organizations do. We have said goodbye to some of our OWLS ("Older Wiser Lutherans") who have moved far from the Midwest to live closer to children and grandchildren, we have welcomed some new OWLS, and we continue to discern our identity as both church and campus center on the edge of this big university.

Our building's age is beginning to show, with failing electrical work, failing appliances, aging and ripping sanctuary chairs. And as wheelchair users increasingly bless us with their involvement at St. Andrew's, we are working as hard as we can to get our

building accessible so we can do effective ministry to and with *all* those God sends through our doors.

The world is changing too; the current generation at the university is referred to as the "nones." A full 1/3 of millennials do not affiliate religiously at all. When those *nones* start poking around in the religious world and discover the Christian faith and the community of Christ, we are all blessed by what they see that we who have been in the church our whole lives do not. Their vision is critical to the church as all over the world it changes and as it changes here in Champaign-Urbana. It is a challenging time and *an exciting time* to be part of the ministry of the Gospel on a major university campus! We are deeply grateful to you for your prayer and financial support and for your friendship.

Peace in Christ, *Pastor Amy C Thoren*

LENT 2017

A provocative Lenten bible study impressed new students:

"Challenging the Biblical Glass Ceiling: Women, Jesus & Luke's Gospel"

"This study really brought to my attention how much I miss in scripture due to my lack of familiarity with Biblical culture and societal norms. A topic for future study? What else in the Gospels is more profound, shocking, or meaningful with a better understanding of society at that time?"

—from a student evaluation

By El Lower, a spring graduate (see back cover)

Regardless of political affiliation, most everyone can agree that we're living in uniquely challenging times. Endless news stories about injustice and intolerance are deeply distressing, but finding meaningful ways to take action and counteract these messages is often difficult. This year's Lenten Table Talk series at St. Andrew's proved to be an ideal solution: discussing ecological, economic, racial, and social justice issues with experts in our community and learning how we can become more effective advocates and allies was a powerful antidote to these messages of despair. Meeting for dinner and dialogue every week was among the highlights of my semester, and I've been very grateful for the chance to join the conversation!



L to R: Sarah Buchhorn, Izzat Hajj, and El learn how people of faith can support environmental legislation.



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INTRODUCING NEW BOARD PRESIDENT: MELISSA IDLEMAN

I'm pleased to serve as the new president of St. Andrew's Board of Trustees. My husband, Randy, and I live in St. Joseph and are members of Prince of Peace Lutheran. I recently finished a 3-year term as vice president on that church council. I work as a Community Connector for a managed care organization. We have two sons: Ian is an Occupational Therapy Assistant who works for a hospital in Elgin and Elliott is a senior in high school.

I grew up in nearby Royal, riding the school bus with Tiana Montgomery, (current board treasurer). Also, I served as the administrative assistant at St. Andrew's to both Pastor Rachel Bass and Pastor Elaine Olson from 2008 to 2010. So it is a joy to be back partnering with all the gifted and faithful members, staff, and trustees engaged in this vital campus ministry! Accessibility continues to be a top priority of this congregation, and we are committed to making the building changes that will allow everyone full access to the whole building, especially to where the kitchen is! Pastor Amy's energetic leadership of the ministry here is contagious! As partners in this ministry, I thank you for your continued support as we follow God's leading live our faith, and share the Good News: Christ has risen indeed!

MINISTRY TO, WITH, AND BY STUDENTS



ACCESSIBILITY FUND UPDATE

fewer phrases are spoken more frequently at St. Andrew's than "everyone is welcome!"

Thanks to you, we've raised \$9,960 toward our Accessibility Project, which is a great start! As we continue working with contractors we're learning that first and largest phase of the project will cost between **\$100,000 - \$125,000.**

It is hard to underestimate how critical accessibility is for us, on the campus with the top Paralympic training center in the country. We believe God is calling us clearly to become *fully* accessible for the benefit of Christ's ministry to *all* who come through our doors, and we are eager to answer this call.



We still hold our mid-week suppers upstairs because our basement (where our kitchen is) is not accessible to all our members/visitors.

WHO ARE OUR NEIGHBORS?

by Lisa Pogue, Ph.D. candidate in Materials Science and Engineering at UIUC

This semester, St. Andrew's Campus Center, responding to strong student interest, organized two visits in response to an invitation from the Central Illinois Mosque and Islamic center (CIMIC). We were given a tour of the Mosque, were invited to observe Friday prayers, and then share a meal and fellowship.

With all the political craziness that was this year, it was great to get to know our neighbors better. No topic was off limits. We talked frankly about the meaning of communion, justice, Biblical interpretation, authority in the church/mosque, law/Sharia, feminism, and modesty. Each discussion went on 3+ hours and we still aren't done. We learned so much from each other! In the future, we are planning more interfaith service and discussion events.



Students from St. Andrew's and members of the local Mosque gather together for a meal and discussion, February 2017.

HAPPIER HOLIDAYS

by Brian Gibbons, PhD candidate in Electrical Engineering at UIUC

This past Christmas season presented St. Andrew's with a fun and unique service opportunity. In order to support and encourage quality family time for the foster children it works with, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI) had the idea to gift a variety of activity baskets to these families. Each basket would provide themed items allowing the children and parents to spend fun, meaningful, and hopefully memorable time together. Happy to support and enable this idea, numerous people from St. Andrew's stepped up to make it a reality. A total of seven different baskets were created, with themes including "Ice Cream Sundae Night", "Art Night", "Pizza Night", "Living Room Camping Trip", and "Maker



On the day after the presidential election, students chalked our wall with words of solidarity for those they thought might feel vulnerable.



Last September we went on a canoeing river clean-up of the Sangamon River.



L to R: Pastor Amy, Vi & Paul Schroeder, Lorraine Stamberger and Rob Foelske deliver our holiday baskets to LSSI.

Night" (for budding architects and engineers), just to name a few. Carefully and lovingly crafted, these baskets were fun for everyone involved and were wrapped up with a joyous "Thank You!" from the people at LSSI. God's work, our hands!