

From the President's Pen

Spring is here, and the anticipation of warmth and life are high. It's appropriate that this Hearth will feature several announcements about new and upcoming events, as well as enhancements to the Seminary's ministry.

Spring semester draws to a close. The Seminary website has undergone a thorough redesign to update and contemporize the contents. Classes have gone well. Personally I've enjoyed the preparation for my new *Old Testament Historical Books* course immensely--I trust the students have benefitted as much as I have. Studies for students have focused on the traditional in the seminary curriculum, such as Bible, Theology, Church History. In addition we are privileged to offer creative coursework this semester that explores Christianity within our culture, such as a study of children's literature of all types evaluated through the lens of a Christian literary perspective. Or creative explorations of how we impact other's lives through down-to-earth practical ministry, such as an advanced examination of counseling from the framework of examining our heart motives.

Quite a few events are coming up in the next few months as we head into summer, many in an early June cluster. We've already experienced the amazing Seminary Library Used Booksale and Veritas Forum. Then Graduation (May 19) and the *Ancient Israel in Chicago* trip to the Oriental Institute Museum in Chicago (June 10). Our 6th annual Preaching Forum on June 12th will feature Dr. Douglas Sweeney providing the training on *Preaching the Sinews of Scripture*.

Library resources have continued to grow apace thanks to multiple donations, both of earmarked funds and books. Some amazing treasures have come in for the collection. In addition, excellent resources that duplicate what we already have were made available to the broader public at the Booksale on April 29th!

As often the case, this time of year brings a slowing down of financial support, so we also have entered a tight period. Would you consider joining others and making a gift at this time, whether to the Founders Fund (general fund), or to the Life Happens campaign, or (even better!) becoming part of our regular monthly support team?

Ken

Ken Cuffey, President

New Online Bookstore

Starting Summer 2016, books for Urbana Seminary's classes have been available directly online through the new Urbana Seminary online bookstore! There are three ways to access this bookstore:

- The first is at this address: <http://astore.amazon.com/urbantheols0f-20>. This will take you to the bookstore itself, where you will be able to find textbooks for classes, faculty publications, and other items as they become available.
- The second is for students to go to the Populi page for your class. Click on the "Info" button. On the left hand side there will be a link called "Bookstore." When you click on that link you go directly to the bookstore page for that class, which lists the required textbooks.
- The Third is from the home page of our new website!

And while this is an Amazon store, a percentage of the price of each book that is bought through this page comes right back to Urbana Theological Seminary.

Donate while you shop at Amazon!

Do you buy books or other items from Amazon.com? If so, you can now donate to Urbana Theological Seminary while shopping at Amazon! Go here for more information: <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/37-1332634>

Students:

Don't Forget to order your text books @
<http://www.urbanaseminary.org/library/bookstore/>

Looking for a Birthday present for your Urbana Seminary student or alumni?

Interested in items that show off your support of UTS? Then check this out:
<http://www.cafepress.com/urbanatheologicalseminarygiftstore>

Faculty Publications and news:

Todd Daly - "Towards a Christian Perspective on Gender Dysphoria." *Everyday Bioethics*. January 11, 2017

<http://everydaybioethics.org/intersections/towards-christian-perspective-gender-dysphoria>

Congratulations to **Joe Thomas**, for making the list of 50 notable alumni for Parkland community college. More info here:

<http://www.parkland.edu/50years/alumbios.aspx#thomas>

PREACHING FORUM 2017

On Monday, June 12th Urbana Seminary's Provisions for Pastors will host the 6th annual Forum on Preaching. This year we welcome Dr Doug Sweeney to lead this practical seminar to help pastors (and anyone else in ministry who speaks in public, or presents the Gospel!) refine and improve their skills in preaching. Dr Sweeney's topic will be *Preaching the Sinews of Scripture*. He will guide us in considering what we can learn for preaching the Word of God in pulpits today from one of America's most well-known preachers, the venerable Jonathan Edwards. Did you know that Edwards presents us with numerous pointers that can sharpen our proclamation in today's culture?

The seminar will only be on June 12th, from 9 AM to 3:30 PM, and will give all participants a chance to "fill up" on creative and practical training. It will be held at Windsor Road Christian Church in Champaign. Anyone in ministry will benefit greatly.

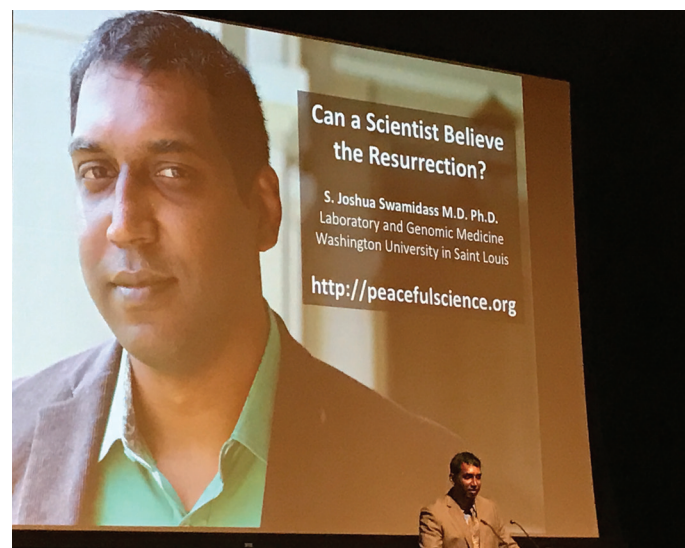
For more information and to register go to: www.urbanaseminary.org/event/preachingforum/



Veritas Forum

“Can a Scientist Believe in the Resurrection?” was the topic of Urbana Seminary’s second Veritas Forum , which was held on April 12, in the Lincoln Hall Theater on the campus of The University of Illinois. Veritas Forum is a nationwide organization with chapters on university campuses that host events designed to challenge faculty and students to ask life’s hardest questions. At this event, 169 people listened to Dr. Josh Swamidass from Washington University (St. Louis) explain why he believes in the resurrection. The talk was followed by a short question and answer session with our Dr. Todd Daly, then the floor opened for questions.

The Tuesday evening before this, Dr. Swamidass and Dr. Cuffey held a discussion at Twin City Bible Church about Scott McKnight’s most recent book, *Adam and the Genome*. Roughly the same number attended this event, as well. For more information on Dr. Swamidass, check out his website:
<http://peacefulscience.org/>



Josh Swamidass, MD, PhD
Assistant Professor in the Department of Immunology and Pathology Division of Laboratory and Genomic Science, Washington University



Some of the people who came to Veritas Forum

Urbana Seminary has a new website!

Our old website was definitely getting dated and hard to use, so a few volunteers, working with Dr. Green, have completely redesigned the website. If you haven’t visited it for a while, check it out! <http://www.urbanatheologicalseminary.org/>

Urbana Theological Seminary

Summer 2017 Courses

CH 603

The Reformation

Instructor: Joe Thomas

Start Date: June 8, 2017

Time: Thursdays | 2PM - 4:30PM

Credit: 2 hours

Location: Windsor Road Christian Church: RM 109

Description: 2017 is the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. The 16th century Protestant Reformation ignited a theological, ecclesiastical, and cultural revolution that forever changed the history and spiritual life of the western Christian Church. Through the careful study of the main figures, their texts and ideas, this course will explore the creation of Lutheranism, the Reformed and Anabaptist movements, the Anglican Church and renewal of the Roman Catholic Church.

FM 740

Rethinking Narnia:

The Chronicles of Narnia by C.S. Lewis

Instructor: Melody Green

Start Date: June 6, 2017

Time: Tuesday | 6PM - 9PM

Credit: 2 hours

Location: TBA

Description: C. S. Lewis's Chronicles of Narnia have delighted readers for more than sixty years. One title in the series is one of the top ten bestselling books of all time; popular movies have been based on them. C. S. Lewis, their author, described them as books that sneak theology "Past watchful dragons." This class will focus on what Lewis meant by that and how it works. After the introduction, we will discuss one Narnia book per week, in the order of publication. This class also includes a day trip to the Marion E. Wade Center at Wheaton College, a museum and study center at Wheaton College that focuses on C. S. Lewis and his friends.

FM 740 125

Solitude and Silence

Instructor: Peter Spychalla

Start Date: May 31, 2017

Time: Wednesday | 6PM - 8:30PM

Credit: 2 hours

Location: Grace Community Church

Description: A study of solitude and silence for communion with God, deep reflection, personal prayer, and Christian spiritual formation. Examination of the need for solitude and silence in light of the noise, demands, and hurry of contemporary life and culture. Consideration of biblical foundations, contemporary and historical literature, and personal and group experiences for developing a practical theology of solitude and silence.

Add / Drop Date: June 15, 2017

Tuition and Fees

Graduate: \$325 / semester hour

Audit: \$325 / class

CEU's for Endorsement: \$425 / class

Summer Fees: \$75

Registration

To register for classes and for course locations visit our website at: www.urbanatheologicalseminary.org

... click "APPLY NOW"

(or for current program or visiting students on Poplui)

Recent Faculty Speaking Engagements:

Ken Cuffey

- Jan 12 - Gridley, IL | *Missional God in the OT*
- Jan 23 - Koinonia House / Stratford House joint retreat, Mahomet, IL | *Colossians 3:12-14*
- Jan 22-Mar 12 - Twin City Bible Church, Adult Ed, Urbana, IL | *Genesis 1-11 and Origins*
- Feb 21 - Taste of Seminary, Champaign, IL
God in the Old Testament: Is he a maniacal, genocidal, malevolent being?
- Feb 25, March 11, April 1, 8 - Lay Training, Covenant Fellowship Church, Champaign, IL
Panorama of the Bible
- Febr 26 - U of I Gospel of John Challenge for Lent, Navigators and TCBC Lincoln (Urbana) and TCBC Midtown (Champaign)
Gospel of John: Background & Overview
- April 2 - Conversations Seminar, Windsor Road Christian Church, Champaign, IL | *The People of God*
- April 11 - Graduate Christian Fellowship with Dr. Joshua Swamidass, discussion of *Adam and the Genome*

Todd Daly

- Feb 28 - Taste of Seminary, Champaign, IL
The Problem of Evil
- Mar 12 - Windsor Road Christian Church, Champaign, IL
Jesus Died for Judas Isacriot
- Apr 9 - Windsor Road Christian Church, Champaign, IL
Jesus Died for Barabbas
- Apr 13 - Parkland Community College, Champaign, IL
Perennial Issues in Bioethics

Melody Green

- Mar 9 - Religious Workers Association, U of I
Matthew 5:3-9

Mike McQueen

- Dec 4, 2016 - Chinese Bible Church of Springfield
- Dec 18, 2016 - Peoria Chinese Christian Church
- Jan 1 - Champaign Chinese Christian Church
- Jan 22 - Stratford Park Bible Chapel
- Feb 5 - Chinese Bible Church of Springfield
- Feb 26 - First Christian Church of Newman
- Mar 5 - Stratford Park Bible Chapel
- Mar 6 - Taste of Seminary, Champaign, IL
Do Christians and Muslims Worship the Same God?
- Mar 16-18 - Illini Chinese Christian Fellowship Spring Retreat
- Mar 19 - Peoria Chinese Christian Church
- Apr 2 - Chinese Bible Church of Springfield

Peter Spychalla

- Feb 5-Mar 12 - East White Oak Bible Church, Carlock, IL
Embracing Our Everyday Callings
- Mar 14 - Taste of Seminary, Champaign, IL
Lectio Divina: For Spiritual Development, or Prayer, or Mysticism?

Joe Thomas

- Jan 29 - Conversations Seminars: Windsor Road Christian Church, Champaign, IL
Religious Freedom

Taste of Seminary Review

by Elizabeth Giger, blogger at <http://madesacred.com>

In a world that demands an avoidance of controversial subjects and determines to pick a fight if such avoidance is disdained, it is revitalizing to discover a space in which it is safe to explore such topics. I have found just such a space in Urbana Theological Seminary's *Taste of Seminary* series. The instructors at UTS have created an environment where difficult issues can be explored deeply, a place where people of different backgrounds and opinions can gather to seek God's viewpoint on matters that have vexed theologians for centuries. Answers are not promised, but for me, a deeper and more coherent understanding has often been found on topics such as God's election, evolution, reconciling the God of the Old Testament to the God of the New, even on issues of gender and transgender identity.

If Christ is before all things and in Him all things hold together, if God has made everything to be sacred, then part of loving God with all of our minds means that we are to explore all the pieces of our lives, from events in the world around us to the commonplace occurrences of our own days, in an attempt to view all of life from the viewpoint of our Christian faith. Taste of Seminary has become one of the main places for me to do this, a place for a community of people to seek God together under the tutelage of those who have spent decades of their lives studying such matters. It is a safe space to pursue the sacredness of all things, to seek to love God with all of our minds as we seek to live out His mission in our world. It is a place for anyone who desires a deeper understanding of life around them from a Biblical viewpoint. I am grateful to Urbana Theological Seminary for providing such a space. It is truly a gift.



FOUNDERS FUND 2017

The Founders Fund campaign for 2017 is underway. The launch of the campaign coincides with the end of Spring semester and our entry into Summer, which have historically been the tightest period in the year for donations and cash flow for the ministry. With so many new initiatives beginning—including training for laypersons and the founding of a new Study Center to reach the University campus, as well as new programs to offer on the graduate Seminary level (more about all of these in the months and years to come!)—we need to ensure that the financial base is secure, the support team of donors expanding, and the cash flow consistent throughout the year.

So how can you minister along with us? Please prayerfully consider making a gift to the Seminary. This could take several forms:

1. **Make a gift for the Founders Fund 2017.** This is all reinvested in the lives of people we train, and helps to keep Seminary training for ministry and Christian leadership within reach and affordable. We can't do it without you. Nor can our students. You minister to them and to us on faculty/staff through your generosity. Thank you in advance!

* If you regularly give at Year End that's great. Thank you! **Consider making double gifts**--one at midyear and one at Year End. This will both increase your support for our students and ministries, and will give a deeper sense of ownership in the work here.

* Please **consider becoming a monthly supporter**, especially through ACH withdrawal (Our excellent accountant, Donna Higgins, appreciates this arrangement's efficiency and consistency so much!). The form to return contains the data needed to make this possible

2. **Make a gift to the Life Happens campaign.** This is an ongoing fund that addresses emergency needs that arise in the student body. Whether it is a health crisis, loss of a job, or other forms of emergency, these funds have been devoted to lessening the tuition that Seminary students owe.

ANCIENT ISRAEL IN CHICAGO: AGAIN!!

Little known to many in downstate Illinois, one of the premier world-class collections of Ancient Near Eastern artifacts is housed on the campus of the University of Chicago at



the Oriental Institute. And a surprising number of the displayed materials have direct and vivid correlations to the Bible, particularly in the Old Testament. And so for the 4th year running, we will hold our *Ancient Israel in Chicago* tour on Saturday, June 10th. The actual tour will be conducted from 1 to 4 PM by Dr Ken Cuffey (Professor, Biblical Studies: Old Testament). All participants will receive the specially designed materials to help in piecing together the flow of Israel's history to see where each artifact fits in historically and theologically.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT: ISRAEL TRIP IN MARCH 2018

Urbana Seminary is delighted to announce a Seminary trip to Israel next March, tentatively scheduled to leave on the 14th and returning on the 24th! Make your plans now. There will be a minimum number that we will need to accommodate to make the trip happen. If you indicate your interest and level of certainty as soon as possible this will help tremendously, and also put you on the contact list for any upcoming info meetings or distribution of useful documents. Please, it is urgent that you let us know if you are interested in coming. Contact mgreen@urbanaseminary.org for more information or to indicate interest. If we do not make the minimum number this time, we will retain the list and build up to a trip in a subsequent year.

This tour will have a credit option for any interested, with a course on *The Land of Israel: Geography, History, and Archaeology* to be offered in Spring 2018 as a "wrap-around" the trip.

However, we welcome people from our whole list of friends to come. You do not have to be enrolled in the course to come and benefit from the trip. The teaching will be conducted by our own Dr. Ken Cuffey, with a particular discipleship emphasis to give you the tool of reading the Bible in its space and time context.