

Dear Congregations of Neighbors in Christ,

As a somewhat older adult, I often have had the experience that I imagine those of you who are somewhat older also have had: that is, hearing from people in the age range of 5-25 share their understandings of the natural and human worlds—what they are and the way they work—that surprise you.

When I taught religion classes at Augustana University in Sioux Falls I heard many students say to me something like the following: “I learned through church (some ELCA) that you can either be a Christian or you can be a scientist—but you can’t be both.” What a surprise to me!

So that it may not come as too much of a surprise to youⁱ, the education committee chair, Lisa Taralseth, and I have arranged for a joint confirmation session of NIC and Peace Lutheran for confirmands to attend a presentation at Peace entitled, “I believe in God, the Creator and I Trust in the Enterprise of Science” on Wednesday evening, Nov. 15th. This talk will be presented by a student from Gustavus Adolphus College who has been a mentor for that College’s Faith, Science, and Ethics Academy.

What a good surprise this Gustavus Academy is! Here’s a descriptor of it on their website:

Students who attend the *Gustavus Academy for Faith, Science, and Ethics* explore the intersection of faith and science while diving into the ethical issues that define our decades. All Academy programs provide opportunities for students to discover how scientists and people of faith are working together to address some of the world’s most pressing problems.

Here's a little more information:

Link: <https://gustavus.edu/chaplain/academy/>

Who Can Register?

Students who will have completed 9th-12th grade by June 2024.

When:

Sometime to be determined for five days in June of 2024.

This, too, may be a surprise to some of you: I co-authored with a cancer scientist the following book: *Chance, Necessity, Love: An Evolutionary Theology of Cancer*. By Leonard M. Hummel and Gayle E. Woloschak. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2017.

I’ll say more about this book some other time.

May God Bless Us All with Faith and Wisdom!

Pastor Leonard Hummel

ⁱ Parents and Students of NIC Confirmation: Lisa and I will be in touch later about food, transportation, and other logistics.