

The Clergy Letter Project

An Open Letter Concerning Religion and Science

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Within the community of Christian believers there are areas of dispute and disagreement, including the proper way to interpret Holy Scripture. While virtually all Christians take the Bible seriously and hold it to be authoritative in matters of faith and practice, the overwhelming majority do not read the Bible literally, as they would a science textbook. Many of the beloved stories found in the Bible – the Creation, Adam and Eve, Noah and the ark – convey timeless truths about God, human beings, and the proper relationship between Creator and creation expressed in the only form capable of transmitting these truths from generation to generation. Religious truth is of a different order from scientific truth. Its purpose is not to convey scientific information but to transform hearts.

We the undersigned, Christian clergy from many different traditions, believe that the timeless truths of the Bible and the discoveries of modern science may comfortably coexist. We believe that the theory of evolution is a foundational scientific truth, one that has stood up to rigorous scrutiny and upon which much of human knowledge and achievement rests. To reject this truth or to treat it as “one theory among others” is to deliberately embrace scientific ignorance and transmit such ignorance to our children. We believe that among God’s good gifts are human minds capable of critical thought and that the failure to fully employ this gift is a rejection of the will of our Creator. To argue that God’s loving plan of salvation for humanity precludes the full employment of the God-given faculty of reason is to attempt to limit God, an act of hubris. We urge school board members to preserve the integrity of the science curriculum by affirming the teaching of the theory of evolution as a core component of human knowledge. We ask that science remain science and that religion remain religion, two very different, but complementary, forms of truth.

The Clergy Letter Project has been officially endorsed by The United Methodist Church, by the Southeast Florida Diocese of the Episcopal Church and by the Southwestern Washington Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America!

Editor’s Notes: Pastor Walter Fohs is one of the 13,539 Christian, Jewish, and other denominational pastors to sign this letter. The national Evolution Weekend for 2011 will take place on February 11-13. The Board has affirmed this decision.

Evolution Weekend is an international celebration that brings together a conversation between religion and evolutionary biology in commemoration of Charles Darwin’s birthday. During Evolution Weekend, Lamb of God Church will provide four specific events to educate, celebrate, and give thanks for the gifts of science and the gifts of faith, that work together. In this environment of bringing these two systems together, the world can become more responsible, its people more knowledgeable, and our planet can become safer.

(more details on the other side)

Our Evolution/Faith weekend at Lamb of God begins with the showing of the most recent movie about Charles Darwin's life, produced in Great Britain just a few years ago, entitled "CREATION". This will take place in the Vineyard beginning at 7:00 pm, Friday evening, February 10th.

A second event will take place on Saturday morning in the same building, beginning at 9:00am and ending at 11:00 am. This lecture and discussion will be provided by Dr. Billy Gunnels, (an Evolutionary Biologist, assisted by Dr. Ed Olson, a Social Scientist, and Pastor Walter Fohs, Pastor at Lamb of God Church.)

A third opportunity will take place at the two worship services at Lamb of God Church, 7:45am and 10:00am. Dr. Gunnels, Dr. Olson, and Pastor Walter will all share a dialogue message, discussing the tasks of bringing these disciplines of Science and Faith together.

A fourth event will be offered on Sunday afternoon, starting at 1:00PM, in the Arbor ... a viewing of the first of Michael Dowd's eight DVD's, bringing the issues of Science and Faith together in ways that are responsible, Biblical, and therefore extremely helpful.

EVOLUTION WEEKEND

Friday, February 10th – 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM
"CREATION" DVD on the Life of Charles Darwin – In the Vineyard

Saturday, February 11th – 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM
Adult Education Discussion – In the Arbor

Sunday, February 12th - Worship Services at 7:45 AM and 10 AM

Sunday, February 12 – 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM
Science and Faith Discussion in the Arbor

