

**Trinity Lutheran Church (LCMS), Palo Alto, and
Christ on Campus / Lutheran Student Fellowship at Stanford**
invite you to join us for our 2008 Spring Lecture Series:



Ancient Slavery and the Modern Christian

A lecture series featuring
the Rev. Dr. John G. Nordling
Concordia Theological Seminary,
Fort Wayne, Indiana

April 11-13, 2008, at Stanford University
and Trinity Lutheran Church, Palo Alto

Onesimus and Paul. John Gilmary Shea, *Little Pictorial Lives of
the Saints* (New York: Benzinger Brothers, 1894).

The Apostle Paul, himself a Roman citizen, identified himself as a “slave of Christ” in his letters to congregations largely composed of slaves. His letters are in large measure couched in the language of Greco-Roman servitude—a cultural phenomenon far removed from antebellum American slavery. Paul even uses this language paradigmatically; all Christians are admonished to live as “slaves of God,” and to present their members as “slaves to righteousness.” Dr. Nordling will explain the cultural phenomenon of which Paul writes and the implications of his use of this metaphor for Christian doctrine and vocation.

The Rev. Dr. John G. Nordling is Associate Professor of Exegetical Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana. He holds an M.A. in Classics from Washington University in St. Louis and a Ph.D. in Classics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. From 1990-1994 he served as pastor at Grace English Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chicago. Before accepting a teaching post at the Seminary in 2006, he taught the Classics at Valparaiso and Baylor Universities. He is the author of the 2004 Concordia Commentary on Philemon.



Trinity Lutheran Church (LCMS)
1295 Middlefield Road – Palo Alto, California

Session One

Friday, April 11, 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Stanford University Main Quad, Geology Corner (Bldg. 320)

Room 105

Ancient Slavery vs. Modern Slavery

Biblical slavery should not be confused with modern, antebellum slavery in the American experience. In this session we will consider mosaics, statues, and frescoes depicting ancient slaves and several passages in the New Testament plainly indicating that large segments of the ancient epistolary audience were comprised of slaves.

Session Two

Saturday, April 12, 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Stanford University Main Quad, Geology Corner (Bldg. 320)

Room 220 (*note room change from Friday*)

The Servility of Christ and the First Christians

Jesus' death upon a cross struck a responsive chord with untold thousands of slaves over whom crucifixion hung like a dark pall in ancient society. In this session we will consider evidence suggesting that the New Testament was pitched to slaves and those of low social status, not merely elites. The Gospel was presented to the world as a bold invitation to anyone and everyone to become a "slave" of God in Christ by faith and Baptism, taking up one's "cross" and following Jesus into a new life and destiny as a disciple of the Crucified One.

Session Three

Saturday, April 12, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Stanford University Main Quad, Geology Corner (Bldg. 320)

Room 220

Biblical Slavery as a Paradigm for Christian Vocation

Ancient slaves, like modern Christians, attended to a bewildering variety of jobs and duties in ancient society, inviting comparison to Luther's doctrine of Christian vocation. In this session we will consider passages that suggest the relationship between masters and slaves in the New Testament and between Christians and persons of greater or lesser station in our world is essentially the same.

Session Four

Sunday, April 13, 9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.

Trinity Lutheran Church, 1295 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto

(You are welcome at the Divine Service at 8:15 or 11:00 a.m.)

Paul's letter to Philemon

Written on behalf of Onesimus, a slave who ran away from Philemon and became as a son to Paul, one who found his usefulness to both Paul and Philemon in Christ, this succinct and beautiful letter beautifully portrays faith in action. In Paul's repayment of Onesimus' debt we see the image of Our Lord Christ's payment for the sins of the world, and its manifestation in the lives of his servants. Dr. Nordling wrote *Philemon* for the Concordia Commentary, published by Concordia Publishing House in 2004.

Finding the Friday and Saturday lectures at Stanford

The Friday and Saturday lectures will be located in the Geology (Southwest) Corner of the Stanford Main Quad, just west of Memorial Church. Parking is available either to the North on the Oval (at the end of Palm Drive) or to the South in the Tressider Lot (L-39) off Mayfield Avenue (access from Campus Drive East). See the web site below for maps indicating the parking lots and talk location, and feel free to contact the Vicar if you need directions.

Finding the Sunday lecture at Trinity, Palo Alto

Trinity Lutheran Church is located at 1295 Middlefield Road in Palo Alto, just northwest of Embarcadero Road—only a short drive or bike ride from the Stanford Campus.

We thank the Graduate InterVarsity Fellowship at Stanford for the use of their usual Friday night room and extend their members a special welcome.

Maps and further information are available at our web site:

<http://lsfatstanford.homestead.com/Speakers/Nordling.html>

For further information, please contact:

Vicar John Sias

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