



Consortium of  
Christian Study Centers

# *PERISCOPE*

## May 2024 Newsletter

Dear Kim,

Quiz: What do the following universities have in common—North Carolina State University, Wake Forest University, Ohio State University, Harvard University, Iowa State University, University of Alabama, Clemson University, and University of South Florida? Nope--nothing to do with protests or cancelled graduations. These are some of the schools where alumni and others have gathered to begin serious efforts to get a Christian Study Center started.

You hadn't heard? Well, that's how history happens. Important events and movements are often quiet but consequential. As an undergraduate student, I had the extraordinary privilege of taking a course with visiting historian [David McCullough](#). He liked to emphasize that the most consequential stories of the 20th century generally unfolded so far from the public eye that they were never mentioned in the newspapers. Consider, for example, the Wright Brothers at Kitty Hawk. When in December 1903 Orville Wright took to the skies for the first time in human history, there were five witnesses and no press coverage.

We don't know what the future holds. The current tumult on campus is surely significant, and by all means, let us keep our students and faculty and study center staff in prayer. But I believe that the work of Christian Study Centers will also prove significant, and very likely even more so, transformatively touching the lives of tens and even hundreds of thousands of students for generations to come.

Incidentally, the number of students at the abovementioned 8 institutions? 275,000! What would it even look like to have study centers that are the right size to serve those kinds of

numbers? A director of one of our larger member centers recently told me that if he had 50 staff, he would have no problem keeping them busy with meaningful work. I don't doubt it.

That is a future of which we dream. Will you dream with us?

In Christ,



Karl E. Johnson  
Executive Director

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## This Month's Highlights

- Join us for the 2023-2024 State of the Consortium meeting on June 3 at 4 pm!  
[Register for the Zoom meeting.](#)
- Read *The Raised Hand's* April essay, "Rediscovering the Transcendent Self with Philip H. Phenix," written by Campbell F. Scribner.
- Study center staff: Register for the [2024 Annual Meeting](#) at the North Carolina Study Center in Chapel Hill!
- Check out [open positions](#) in study center land!

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## State of the Consortium

Join the Consortium to hear from Executive Director Karl Johnson on current programming, financials and 2023-24 accomplishments—all made possible by your partnership.

Register for the online meeting at 4 pm on June 3 on Monday.

[Register](#)



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## The Raised Hand



The April essay from *The Raised Hand* is written by **Campbell F. Scribner**, an associate professor of education at the University of Maryland, where he teaches courses on educational history, philosophy, and law. He is the author of several books, most recently *A is for Arson: A History of Vandalism in American Education* (2023). He is now working on an intellectual biography of Philip H. Phenix.

This essay is titled, "Rediscovering the Transcendent Self with Philip H. Phenix."

[Read the Essay & Subscribe](#)

## 2024 Annual Meeting



JULY 15-17



CHAPEL HILL, NC

The 2024 Annual Meeting will be hosted at the North Carolina Study Center in Chapel Hill, NC from July 15-17. **Registration is open!** Join the Consortium and dozens of study center directors and staff for a time of fellowship, sharing of best practices, and engaging keynote presentations. NCSC recently completed a \$2.4M renovation on its 180-year-old historic home that is a 5-minute walk from the center of the UNC-Chapel Hill campus. The 6,500+ sq. foot NCSC home and other on-campus buildings will provide Annual Meeting attendees with a taste of southern hospitality and community.

Featured speakers include **Greg Jones**, President of Belmont University, **Christopher Clemens**, Provost and Chief Academic Officer at UNC-Chapel Hill, and **Mia Chung**, concert pianist and Executive Director of the Octet Collaborative.

[Learn More](#)

[Register](#)

## Featured Study Center Events



## No Onslaught More Fierce: How Tolkien's Epic Heroes Are Tied Together

Tuesday, May 14th at 7 pm ET  
In-person: Northfield, MA

Who is the greatest warrior in Middle-earth? What makes a great cliffhanger? All this and more in the final three chapters of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Two Towers*. Dive into the connections that lead from Beren and Lúthien to Master Samwise Gamgee, from the lord of Balrogs to a simple gardener, from domination over others to love for others.

[Learn More](#)



## Philosophy Camp: What Is Justice?

June 25 - 27  
In-person: Minneapolis, MN

Politics have become an area of confusion, conflict, and deadlock. This summer, rising sophomores, juniors and seniors are invited to join Anselm House to get past the muddle and initiate reasoned, productive political conversation by returning to first principles of political philosophy. By examining various philosophical concepts of justice and the just (or ideal) society, we'll learn how to engage *better* in civil political dialogue, with



## Graduation Brunch 2024

Saturday, May 18th at 10:30 am ET  
In-person: Charlottesville, VA

Graduates, families, and guests are invited to join the Center for Christian Study for brunch to celebrate the Class of 2024!

[Register](#)



## Learning to Disagree with Empathy & Respect

Thursday, June 6th at 4 pm CT  
In-person: Madison, WI

Washington University in St. Louis Law Professor John Inazu will discuss his new book *Learning to Disagree: The Surprising Path to Navigating Differences with Empathy and Respect* (Zondervan, 2024). John will discuss what he has learned through his years teaching and working as a litigator, based on navigating conversations with those whose viewpoints seemed ill-informed, wrong, or even evil. At the same time, he will also share gleaned insights that can inform patience, trust, forgiveness, and compassion for the "other."

[Register](#)

the aim of becoming more virtuous citizens  
and human beings.

Register

See More Events

## Partner Organization News & Events



### Practicing Civic Discipleship

Friday, May 17th at 1:30 pm ET  
Virtual

The Trinity Forum invites you to join an Online Conversation with **Walter Kim**, President of the National Association of Evangelicals, and **Adam Taylor**, President of Sojourners, to explore how we can connect discipleship with our participation in public life.

Register



### ASA Faith & Science Conference & Pre-Events

July 25 - 29  
In-person: Washington, DC

Hear **Francis Collins**, **Beth Allison Barr**, **Praveen Sethupathy**, **Charmaine Royal**, and **Brandon Vaidyanathan**. American Scientific Affiliation, a scholarly & professional society for Christians in science, welcomes you. Explore extra opportunities: [Generating Wisdom: AI & the Bible](#), a [Pre-Conference Retreat for Underrepresented Grad Students/Postdocs/Early Career Scientists](#), and general [Student/Early Career Scholarships](#). Contact Hannah Eagleson at [hannah@asa3.org](mailto:hannah@asa3.org) with questions.

Learn More



## How To Listen to Music with Andy Crouch

**Curtis Chang** engages in a captivating conversation with **Andy Crouch** about the profound significance of music in our everyday existence. Through insightful anecdotes and reflections, they explore how to actively listen to music and let it transcend mere entertainment to become a powerful conduit for meaning, expression, and even spiritual meditation.

[Listen Now](#)

# VERITAS FORUM

*Exploring the ideas that shape our lives*

## Is AI a Threat to Human Dignity?

**Rosalind Picard** of MIT and **Max Tegmark** of MIT explore artificial intelligence, humanity, and moral responsibility for A.I. development.

[Watch Now](#)

## Faculty Theological Collaborative



Faculty associated with any Christian study center or center for Catholic thought are welcome to participate in the **Faculty Theological Collaborative** from July 29 to 31 in Durham, NC.

Christian professors at secular universities are called to glorify God through the life of the mind in a unique way. The Faculty Theological Collaborative exists to support faculty in this calling through advanced theological training, living examples of the integration of faith and scholarship, and rich fellowship with Christian faculty across institutions and disciplines. The three-day workshop is built around a series of dialogues between academic theologians and scholars in the natural sciences, social sciences, and arts and humanities.

This year's special theme is the doctrine of creation. Knowing God as Creator illuminates all of our work, whether it's discerning God's design in the created order, stewarding the

creatures he has entrusted to our care, understanding the institutions and technologies humans have created as expressions of our potential as *imago dei*, or participating in God's ongoing work in our own creativity.

Directors are welcome to attend if they bring at least one faculty member from their institution. Questions? Email Kathryn Wagner at [kathryn.wagner@duke.edu](mailto:kathryn.wagner@duke.edu).

[Learn More](#)

## Open Positions at Christian Study Centers



There are a few open positions at Christian Study Centers! Apply or share with someone who may be interested.

- [Director of Advancement](#) at Anselm House in Minneapolis, MN
- [Development Coordinator](#) at the Center for Christianity & Scholarship in Durham, NC
- [Undergraduate Student Formation Team Member](#) at the Center for Christianity & Scholarship in Durham, NC

[Learn More](#)

## Recommendations



### The Intersection of Christianity & Pop Culture

In this episode, Daniel Hummel and **John Anthony Dunne** explore the relationship between Christianity and pop culture. Dunne is associate professor of Biblical and Theological Studies at Bethel University and a thought leader on integrating theology with pop culture narratives.



### A Hopeful Vision for the Study Center Movement

The spring issue of the Christian Study Center of Gainesville featured Karl Johnson to discuss Christian study centers, the difficult times we're facing in higher education, and his suggestions for parents concerned about their children going to university.

Listen Now

Read Now

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*As always, keep sending your events our way so that we may distribute them to all who have expressed interest in the good work of the Consortium's members and partners.*

*Did someone forward this newsletter to you?*

Sign Up

Support the Movement



***Cultivating Thoughtful Christian Presence***

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