

PERSPECTIVE

INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES

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SUK AND VANDEZANDE HEADLINE ICS CONVOCATION

Working to make Wisdom and Compassion Embrace

by Lorraine Voorberg, ICS Junior Member

Friday, October 20 was a memorable day for the Institute for Christian Studies community. It marked the celebration of the President's inaugural address *and* the conferral of the first ICS honorary doctorate. Alumni, long-time supporters, friends, and family joined faculty, students, and distinguished guests at St Andrew's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Toronto to hear the Reverend Doctor John Suk share his vision for the work of the Institute and to celebrate Gerald Vandezande's lifetime commitment to public compassion and justice.

John introduced his vision (*see President's Angle, page 2*) for ICS as a place where students are equipped with wisdom and compassion. He began his address by sharing a story of Gillian, a young woman from Zimbabwe who lived with his family during a Rotary exchange program. During her time with the Suks, she began to grasp the extent of the devastation of AIDS in her community. John outlined the path that led Gillian to fully funded doctoral research in drug development in order to help find a cure for AIDS. "We don't often connect compassion with wisdom or knowledge," John said, but Gillian's story "illustrates that, for the healing of the nations, wisdom and compassion must embrace."

Compassion is when you "get your tongue as twisted and knotted as your intestines feel . . . when you're really hurting for someone else," John explained, using the Greek word for compassion, *spagxnisthey*, to support this meaning. Jesus had compassion for the people who followed him when he tried to find a solitary place. He showed them compassion by teaching them *before* he fed them from five loaves and two fish (Mark 6:30-44). John pointed out that "God's compassion and wisdom embrace for our redemption. And at ICS we seek ourselves, our students, and our community from within that embrace."



John Suk, Gerald Vandezande and ICS Chancellor Barbara Carvill

Gerald Vandezande awarded Doctor of Letters Degree

Reflection on the embrace of wisdom and compassion is not unique to ICS. While the Convocation was an occasion for ICS's new President to promote the complementarity of wisdom and compassion, it was also a special occasion to confer the degree of Doctor of Letters (*honoris causa*)—a first for ICS—on Gerald Vandezande. Gerald's lifelong pursuit and promotion of "communal compassion and public justice" as founding member of Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ) and as veteran advocate was affirmed by friends, policy makers, supporters, and others. The conferral of the doctorate was a fitting recognition of his deep Christian commitment to promote public policies for healing, justice, and peace in areas such as aboriginal and refugee rights, educational justice, poverty, the environment, and national unity.

PRESIDENT'S ANGLE

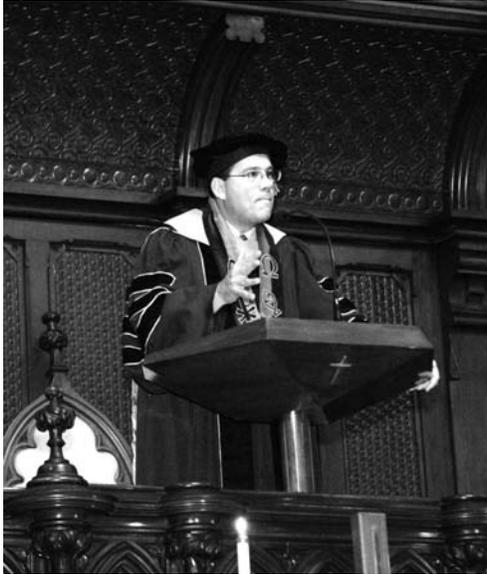
Until Wisdom and Compassion Embrace

My family has a foster daughter named Gillian. We got to know her when she lived with us as a Zimbabwean exchange student. Gillian didn't know much about life in North America when she first came. Turning on a shower, using a computer, and making a snowman were all new to her. And AIDS was new too.

Gillian knew about friends and family back in Zimbabwe who were dying of pneumonia. She knew about people dying of mysterious diseases and infections. But it wasn't till she attended an American high school that she really understood what was going on. When she returned to Zimbabwe, she volunteered with the Rotary Club to raise awareness about AIDS.

After President Robert Mugabe closed the universities in Zimbabwe, Gillian enrolled in a Grand Rapids College. And now she's studying for a PhD in Biochemistry at the University of

Syracuse on a full scholarship. Gillian is very motivated. Soon after getting back to the US, Gillian said to me, "I have to help find a cure for AIDS before all my friends and family die." In Gillian, compassion and wisdom embrace.



Gillian's story illustrates that for the healing of the nations, compassion and wisdom must embrace. As they do for Jesus. In Mark 6 he has tried to get

away from the crowds that follow him everywhere. Failing, he turns to face them, and Mark says that he was full of compassion. What did Jesus do then? Heal the sick? Mark doesn't say so. Feed the hungry? Eventually. But first, filled with compassion, what Jesus does is teach the crowds. "Many things." Parables, I suppose. Beatitudes. Upbraiding the Pharisees who "have taken away the key to knowledge" (Luke 11:52).

For God in Christ, compassion and wisdom embrace. At the ICS, we try to find ourselves within that embrace. Our mission is, in part, to witness to Christ in the academic arena by letting the Gospel's message of healing, renewal and restoration shape our pursuit of knowledge and wisdom. Bringing learning into the service of Jesus' redemptive program is on our minds . . . and hearts.

John Suk

Excerpted from John Suk's inaugural address. For the full text, go to <http://www.icscanada.edu/resources/>. To listen to the Inaugural address and other audio recordings, go to:

<http://www.icscanada.edu/audio>

TRANSITIONS

Lyn Storms, Director of Finance, has moved back to Australia with her husband, Wes. Lyn will continue to manage ICS bookkeeping from afar. We appreciate her willingness to continue to provide her knowledge and experience to ICS through the use of information and communications technology.

Henriette Thompson joined the ICS as Associate Dean on August 29. Henriette, a long-time ICS supporter, was Director of Advocacy and Education at World Vision Canada. She holds a Master of Management degree from McGill University and a BA in Political Science from York University.

Dr. Jonathan Chaplin was appointed Director of the Institute for Christian Ethics at Tyndale House in Cambridge, England in 2006. He was the former holder of the Herman Dooyeweerd Chair in Social and Political Philosophy and ICS Senior Member in Political Theory since 1999. This appointment will allow Jonathan to

continue his research, writing, and speaking in the area of Christian social and political thought. This past year, in addition to his teaching and research, Jonathan served very effectively as Academic Dean and, for a time, as Acting President.

Dr. Adrienne Dengerink Chaplin (pictured at right), Senior Member in Philosophical Aesthetics at ICS since 1999, will also return to Cambridge after completing her course commitments in December, 2006. Adrienne has created important links between the Christian Art Community and the ICS through Art Talks! symposia and other partnerships. In England, Adrienne will continue her research and writing projects.

Position postings for Senior Member in Political Theory and Senior Member in Philosophical Aesthetics are located at:

<http://www.icscanada.edu/ics/>



FACULTY FOCUS

Nik Ansell

Nik's book *The Annihilation of Hell* was accepted for publication in the Paternoster Monograph Series to appear in 2007. On Sunday, October 29, he preached at Rehoboth CRC Fellowship in Toronto on a Reformation Day theme, "Are we reformed?" Nik's OMNI 1 televised discussion of Revelation on a program called "3D: Dialogue" in May was recently posted on YouTube.com. Nik offered a workshop, "Moving Beyond the Image of God: Humanity Between Creation and Eschaton" on November 6 at the annual Pastors' Conference in Sumas, Washington.

Doug Blomberg

In September, Doug participated in the Christian Schools International Leadership Consultation in Toronto. In November, he attended the International Association for the Promotion of Christian Higher Education Conference in Granada, Nicaragua. As a member of the Steering Committee for the Christian Academic Studies Certificate, he was asked to participate in a number of information sessions about CASC, in which ICS is a lead institution. He also presented a paper, "New wine-skins," exploring the contribution that Christian higher education institutions can make to day schools in the two-thirds world, and a session outlining his new book, *Wisdom and curriculum*.

Adrienne Dengerink Chaplin

In partnership with Imago, Adrienne coordinated the 10th annual "Art talks!" lecture and symposium at ICS, November 10, 11. Artist and author, Betty Spackman spoke on "A Profound Weakness: Christians and Kitsch." Symposium participants reflected on "Christians and Visual Culture" and included Betty Spackman, Calvin Seerveld, Mary Leigh Mobery, Chris Cuthill, John Franklin and Adrienne Dengerink Chaplin.

Ron Kuipers

On November 18 Ron presented a paper, "Subversive Force of the Imaginary: Christianity as Radical Possibility in the Thought of Paul Ricoeur" to a special session of the Philosophy of Religion group at the American Academy of Religion annual meeting in Washington, DC. Two works by Ron have recently been published. One is a

chapter in a book called *Faith in the Enlightenment? The Critique of Enlightenment Revisited* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi). The chapter is called "Reconciling a Shattered Modernity: Habermas on the Enduring Relevance of the Judeo-Christian Ethical Tradition." The second is an article in the journal "Contemporary Pragmatism" (Vol 3/1, 2006) and is entitled, "Stout's Democracy without Secularism: But is it a Tradition?" a discussion of Jeffrey Stout's recent and important book *Democracy and Tradition*.

Bob Sweetman

From October 23-25 Bob led a discussion on the opening chapters of Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Contra Gentiles* for a Philosophy of Religion class at Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, Conn. He also gave a lecture entitled "Catholicity Across the Curriculum from Bonaventure to John Paul II."

Lambert Zuidervaart

Lambert was appointed Holder of the Dooyeweerd Chair in Social and Political Philosophy in October. In this role, his key task will be "to continue, promote, and develop the project of critical, systematic Christian social and political philosophy that was also (Herman) Dooyeweerd's vision." In November Lambert met with administrators at Calvin College about research opportunities.

Sylvia Keesmaat

Sylvia Keesmaat & Brian Walsh hosted a family conference called "Practising Resurrection" at their Bobcaygeon, Ontario farm in August. November marked a busy month for Sylvia. She presented on "Challenging Complacency: Do Christians Care about Social Justice?" at Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship conference at Middlebury College, Vermont on the 10th. The following week she made presentations to the Society of Biblical Literature annual meeting in Washington, DC on "Echoes, Empire and Ethics in Colossians" and "Operation Infinite Justice: The Righteousness of God in Paul."

Calvin Seerveld

Calvin has been invited to facilitate a workshop with song-writer/singer Michael Card at the Calvin Worship Conference in January 2008. He is also preparing a presentation on "Reading the Arts Glocally in Our Backyard" for a conference on "Reading the World: Applying a Christian Worldview for Our Times" at Trinity Christian College on Chicago in May 2007.

George Vandervelde

On September 29 ICS hosted a symposium to celebrate the academic contributions of Senior Member Emeritus George Vandervelde. The symposium centred around the essays contained in

That the World May Believe: Essays on Mission and Unity in Honour of George Vandervelde (University Press of America). Reflections on George's work were offered by the editors, Michael Goheen and Margaret O'Gara as well as Senior Members Nik Ansell and Robert Sweetman.

Visiting scholars

Dr. Bob Goudzwaard, Distinguished Associate of ICS and Mark VanderVennen met with Junior Members and staff on October 20 to discuss themes in their upcoming book, *Hope in Troubled Times*.

Dr. Janel Curry, Calvin College Dean of Research and Scholarship and Professor of Geography and Environmental Studies and **Dr. Helen Sterk**, Chair of the Department of Communication Arts and Sciences presented lectures on November 3 under the joint heading of "Negotiating Boundaries (natural and not)." Dr. Curry presented on "Globalization and the Problem of the Nature/Culture Boundary." Dr. Sterk spoke to faculty, junior members, staff and guests on "Gender, Culture and Care."

STUDENT & ALUMNI FOCUS

Junior Members **Michael and Yvana Mols** presented papers at a two day conference on "After Ricoeur" in Oklahoma City. Yvana presented a paper entitled, "Mixing Genres to Open Worlds?: Means and Ends in Carla Harryman and Paul Ricoeur," while Michael spoke on "Song of Songs: a Reply to Ricoeur."

Two junior members facilitated workshops at the Worldview Conference on October 28. **Rachel McGuire's** workshop focused on "The Role of Encounter in the Story of Creation: Biblical Approaches to Religious Pluralism"; **Jon Stanley** explored "For the Sake of Justice, not Just for the Sake of It: A Fresh Look at Three (All Too) Familiar Passages."

On November 1, **Dr. Lois Wilson**, Toronto School of Theology Ecumenist-in-Residence met with Junior Members, Senior Members and staff to learn more about ICS. She reflected on Christian faith commitment as revealed through the learnings of a long-term study of a group of Canadian women.



The Very Rev., the Hon. Lois M. Wilson, engages Junior Members during November 1 visit.

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COMMUNITY LIFE



Students and staff enjoy (top) a potluck meal and (above) a friendly game of Chinese checkers.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Western Canada ICS Worldview Conferences

**Burning Questions? Biblical Answers?
Can an Ancient Text Guide Us?**

Keynote address by Richard Middleton

- Vancouver, BC
Fleetwood Christian Reformed Church
Saturday, February 3, 2007
- Calgary, AB
First Christian Reformed Church
Saturday, March 3, 2007
- Edmonton, AB
The King's University College
Saturday, March 17, 2007

BOOKS

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416-979-2331
(toll-free 888-326-5347).

“FRIENDS OF ICS” CHANGES

Starting September 1, 2006, (Elizabeth) Alice Greidanus will oversee administration of Friends of ICS (FICS), the US foundation that receives and receipts donations in support of the mission of ICS. For questions regarding FICS or your donations contact Alice at:

Address: Friends of ICS,
200 Sligh Blvd NE,
Grand Rapids, MI 49505

Telephone: (616) 365-9630
(Grand Rapids local)

Facsimile: (616) 365-9630

Toll-free: (800) 365-9630

Email: info@friendsofics.org

New Means of Giving:

- FICS is a 501 (c) 3 and issues tax deductible receipts for donations.
- US donors can give to FICS online at:
www.friendsofics.org
with VISA or MC.
- FICS has a brokerage account and gifts of appreciated publicly traded securities are a wonderful, tax efficient way to give. Call or email for more information.

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