

# ACULTY

### Dear Readers,

You may know by now that I am no longer the Director of InterVarsity's Faculty Ministry. This issue is an introduction to the new Director, Stan Wallace. Hear Ye Him!

Terry Morrison Director Emeritus, InterVarsity's Faculty Ministry Editor, Faculty Newsletter

t is an egregious understatement to say that Terry Morrison has served faculty, the Kingdom of God, and the ministry of InterVarsity nobly and extremely effectively these past thirteen years during his tenure as Director of Faculty Ministry. Terry officially stepped down on December 31, 2003, and I have been asked to move into this role. I am honored, humbled, excited, overwhelmed, and eager as I move into this new position and seek to build on the foundation Terry, and his predecessor Charles Hummel, have laid over the past 28 years of InterVarsity's Faculty Ministry. As we transition, Terry has asked me to write about my hopes and dreams for the coming years of serving you as you serve Christ within academe.

As we look toward the future of faculty ministry, opportunities abound. The challenge is to know which to pursue and where to focus so as to have the greatest redemptive influence on the people, ideas, and structures of the academy for the glory of God and building of his Kingdom. Proverbs 15:22 gives direction here: "Without consultation, plans are frustrated, but with many counselors they succeed." I believe God would have a small group of faculty and InterVarsity staff join together for a season to dream, discuss, and plan the next phase of InterVarsity's Faculty Ministry. I look forward to gathering such a group so that we may begin to work together to launch the next phase of our ministry!

# The Future of Faculty Ministry

In particular, I am in the process of inviting a diverse group of faculty to serve on a Faculty Advisory Council. I am also in the process of hiring a team of Associate Directors who will serve with me on the Faculty Ministry Leadership Team. Together, we will all seek God's will as to how we can best serve faculty in the coming months, years, and decades.

My prayer is that God will honor our efforts and that eventually communities of Christian faculty will flourish on every campus in the country, encouraging one another to "love and good deeds." More specifically, I hope these communities will inculcate four central values: the importance and practice of spiritual formation; true community; evangelism and service that honors and builds the Kingdom; and the full integration of faith, learning, and practice.

As I assume this role, I want to do a great deal of listening and learn all I can from those actually serving Christ as academics, so as to truly serve you better. Therefore, I would love to hear from you - your ideas, concerns, hopes, and fears. How are we serving you well? How can we better serve you? What should we do differently? What should we not change at all? Do you have any concerns? What are your expectations? Please feel free to call me (813-994-2774) or email me (swallace@ivcf.org) at any time to share your thoughts - I and InterVarsity's Faculty Ministry will greatly benefit from your wisdom and counsel. Lastly, I look forward to meeting you when our paths next cross at a conference, on campus, or

Stan Wallace Director InterVarsity's Faculty Ministry

elsewhere!

# **Opportunities**

please visit our newly updated web site, www.facultyministry.org, for more information about Faculty Ministry. You can also find the Faculty Newsletter published there.

Christianity and the Soul of the University: Faith as a Foundation for the Intellectual Community — March 25-27, 2004, at Baylor University. Visit www.baylor.edu/CCSS/events/soul.htm for more information.

The Pruit Memorial Symposium: Slavery, Oppression and Prejudice: Ancient Roots and Modern Implications — September 30-October 2, 2004, at Baylor University. Visit www.baylor.edu/FL/Pruit2004/about.htm.

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# Launching a New Endeavor: the Emerging Scholars Network

The Emerging Scholars Network is a new endeavor of InterVarsity's Faculty Ministry, which has grown out of the vision of a number of us concerned with rising scholars. Our Mission Statement spells this out: we aim "... to identify, encourage, and support the next generation of Christian scholars, at all stages of their academic careers, who will be a redeeming influence within higher education." We hope to help emerging scholars ask and answer four questions many of us have wrestled with:

Why should I consider pursuing an academic vocation?

What do I need to learn about Christian thought and practice to be faithful within my academic calling?

How do I navigate the various stages and transitions of an academic career?

Who can help me at each stage of my professional development, and whom can I help?

We have been in a planning phase with a diverse group of faculty, InterVarsity staff, and others for twenty months and are publicly launching the Emerging Scholars Network on March 1, 2004, as membership is opened via our web site. However, the success of Emerging Scholars Network depends both on the participation of emerging scholars and the participation of more established scholars — those who are further down the academic road and willing to nurture their colleagues as well as be nurtured. Most academics will fall into both categories — still having much to learn as you continue to grow into all God has called you to and also able to be an encouragement to Christian scholars at earlier stages of their careers.

In light of this, we ask you to visit the ESN web site (www.emergingscholars.org) and become a member of this Network. (It's very simple: all that's needed for membership is affirmation of the ESN Mission and registration via the online form.) As a member you will be a part of a growing community which we believe will prove valuable to you and also afford you the opportunity to serve other rising Christian academics. This opportunity is a direct way to obey our Lord's charge—"consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds" (Hebrews 10:24). After joining, be sure to watch the pages of the *Faculty Newsletter* for other specific, practical ways you can be involved in the Emerging Scholars Network!

## Keeping Up

Perspectives on an Evolving Creation, edited by Keith B. Miller, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, MI, 2003.

"Controversies over evolution excite every bit as much passion early in the 21st century as they have ever done." So say Mark Noll and David Livingston and so say we all! We've plenty of experience of the issue of origins — biblical and scientific — causing an uproar among believers in Jesus. Here is a book that I would call "state of the art" in this controversy. The editor, Keith Miller, has been deeply engaged in this struggle much of his life. Here he has recruited contributors to the discussion from all the relevant sciences, from history, and from theology. True, there are no young earth creationists or "ID" (intelligent design) perspectives, but it is an argument encompassing the best thoughts from the perspective of what the book's title suggests: "evolving creation."

The contributors range from astronomers through biochemists, biologists, palentologists, environmental scientists, historians, geologists, theologians, and psychologists. Indeed, I would say that whatever questions

you have had about the origins issue in terms of science-biblical interface have been addressed here. I must confess some of the answers strike me as very speculative, and with some I personally disagree, but I believe they are bravely facing every issue you could think of raising. It covers the whole of Genesis 1-11, but primarily the creation of the universe, of life on earth, and of human beings in the first relationships with God.

Some of this is quite consonant with a volume by Henri Blocher, *In the Beginning*, (InterVarsity Press, 1984), but *Perspectives on Evolving Creations* is mostly from a perspective of science, very technical in some places, full of good illustrations and tables and references. This would make an ideal text for a semester or year-long course at the university level. A beautiful feature is that interspersed between the chapters are brief devotionals offered by the various writers of the chapters, many of them focusing on the Psalms but with works of art, photographs, and other opportunities for the eye (as well as the words for the brain), giving us an invitation to lift our hearts and minds to God in the context of what we read. (continued on page 3)

## Keeping Up (con't)

Here follow some quotes to whet your appetite. From the excellent biblical, theological study of the first chapters of Genesis, this from Conrad Hyers on page 32: "When we examine the Genesis account of origins in its own terms and its own historical context, it becomes apparent that we have something that is considerably different from that of the natural sciences. It has a theological agenda aimed at affirming a monotheistic reading of the cosmos and rejecting the prevailing polytheistic reading. None of its phrasing or organization or use of numbers corresponds to the methods and materials of the natural sciences. This does not imply that Genesis is to be seen as unscientific or antiscientific or even prescientific, as if superseded by better methods of understanding the world. The materials of Genesis 1 are nonscientific; they offer a different kind of map of the universe and our place within it."

In his chapter, Loren Haarsma comments on page 84 on the discussions over "methodological naturalism" and has this to say on the general principles: "Is it possible to scientifically prove that God superseded natural laws in a particular event? Or does science rule out any possibility of such things? A practical understanding of what science can and cannot do should warn us against either extreme. Scientists seek to understand puzzling events and puzzling processes. When faced with a particular puzzling event, science can neither prove nor disprove that natural laws were superseded. What can science do? Science tries to build a quantitative, empirical model of the event using its understanding of natural laws plus information about the physical conditions before, during, and after the event."

In his response to the Intelligent Design movement, Terry Gray, a biochemist, takes on Michael Behe, Jonathan Wells, and others in that movement. I admire the way Gray concludes his chapter and would recommend his attitude of withholding judgment to all in this very complex discussion in which we're engaged.

"Finally, some words are in order concerning the origin of man. The arguments for evolution given above fully include human beings in the macro-evolutionary picture. There is nothing in the biology or chemistry of *Homo sapiens* that would suggest that our origin is not explained by this same evolutionary explanation. However, the biblical account of man's origin seems to suggest a rather unique origin of humanity, both physically and spiritually, that would put man outside this process. Personally, I have to admit that I have not

settled this question in my own mind....I am content to remain in a state of cognitive dissonance on this issue until further clarity comes my way." (p. 287)

In an interesting footnote in response to some of the comments of Intelligent Design movement writers, Gray and co-chapter writer, Loren Haarsma, comment: "...Whatever might be said, good or bad, about the scientific and theological arguments of Intelligent Design theory, we are troubled by the appropriation of the word "design" to exclude evolution. Intelligent Design theory, the way it is typically presented, seems to offer the following choice: either modern life forms evolved or they were designed. That is a false choice. Christian theology says that modern life forms were definitely designed by God, whether God used ordinary evolution or superseded it." (p.289, Footnote 2)

In a very creative chapter, "Christology, Evolution, and the Cross," George Murphy, a physicist and Lutheran pastor writes: "If God acts in this way [i.e. kenoti-cally] then it will be possible to describe what goes on in the world in terms of natural processes, without any reference to the God who works through them. These processes are then not only instruments of God but, in Luther's phrase, 'masks of God' which hide the creator from our direct observation.

"This would mean that God's involvement in what happens in the world is to be discerned by faith, and will not be discovered by the methods of the natural sciences." That's a line to meditate on for a long time.

Murphy goes on to wrestle with the all important issue of theodicy: "We still have to deal with the question of the processes that actually are involved in biological evolution and, in particular, natural selection. The traditional problem of theodicy, how an all-good and all-powerful God can allow evil, is sharpened by evolution, for God apparently does not just allow evil but uses it in order to create. It is true that this seems to give evil some purpose, but it also raises questions about the character of a deity who would work in this way. It is hard for many people to understand how a good and loving God, one whose 'compassion...is for every living thing' (Sir.18:13), could create by forcing millions of generations of living things through a relentless process of competition, want, struggle, and extinction.

"The Bible, however, witnesses to a God whose characteristic work is to bring about good in spite of what, from the standpoint of creatures, negates the very possibility of good. . . (continued on page 4)

# Keeping Up (con't)

"God does not simply stand above the evolutionary process and make it happen. In the incarnation, God becomes a participant in that process, taking a place on the side of the losers in the 'struggle for survival' — for in the short run, Caiaphas and Pontius Pilate are the survivors. And the resurrection of the crucified means that natural selection, important as it is as an evolutionary mechanism, is not God's last word. There is hope for those who do not survive." (p.309)

This, I think, is a very creative chapter.

The book concludes with two chapters dealing with evolution and original sin and with evolution, cognitive

neuroscience, and the soul. As I indicated, this book covers every question I could think of in the origins debate. I think it endeavors to give a fully biblical and up-to-date scientific account of each of them. In order to be well informed, I recommend that you read this book, pass it on to others, and prayerfully and thoughtfully interact with the many references and arguments contained in it to shape your own perspectives on this issue.

Terry Morrison Director Emeritus InterVarsity's Faculty Ministry

# More Opportunities

The University of Texas Ethics Conference, Foundations for Ethical Education in a Post-Enron Age — April 15-16, 2004, at the LBJ Auditorium, The University of Texas at Austin. Plenary speakers are Dallas Willard, David Novak, Aine Donovan, and Peter Kreeft. For information and a call for papers, visit this web site: www.engr.utexas.edu/cofe/ethics2004/.

Up-State New York Grad/Faculty One Day Conference — April 3, 2004, at Cornell University. Contact Christian Anible at cia4@cornell.edu for more information.

National Faculty Leadership Conference — June 24-27, 2004, near Washington, D.C. Visit www.nflc.us for registration, schedule, speakers, a call for papers, and more.

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