

BRAATEN-BENNE
LECTURES IN
THEOLOGY

ABOUT THE BRAATEN-BENNE LECTURES IN THEOLOGY

The Carl E. Braaten and Robert D. Benne Lectures in Theology have been an integral part of Lutheran Week since 2009. The event originated as the Lutheran CORE Theological Conference, and came under additional sponsorship from the North American Lutheran Church in 2010. In 2015, it was renamed in honor of Carl E. Braaten and Robert D. Benne, prominent Lutheran theologians who organized and conducted the theological lectures for the first five years (2010-2014). The Lectures reflect a commitment on the part of the North American Lutheran Church, the organizers of Lutheran Week, and the series steering committee to the significance of theology for the future of North American Lutheranism.

Each year the series brings together leading theologians, biblical scholars and ethicists from across confessional and ecumenical boundaries to address key issues of Christian faith and practice. While the papers are scholarly in nature, presenters are asked to keep the local church in mind. Each paper is followed by a question-and-answer session, with audience members determining the course of the discussion. One of the highlights of the annual event is the roundtable panel session at the close of the lectures. This yearly event gathers an audience composed of laypersons, students, pastors, professional scholars and denominational leaders.

The conference theme for 2023 is God the Father Creates in His Image (Genesis 1:27). This is the second half of a study on God the Father begun in 2021, and the final installment of a six-year focus on the Holy Trinity. Theological anthropology will be at the forefront: to be created in the image of God – what does this mean for us? According to the apostolic faith, what is the nature of humanity, and what kinds of moral challenges does the church face in this respect when it comes to being in, but not of, the world?

BRAATEN-BENNE LECTURES IN THEOLOGY SCHEDULE

Tuesday, August 8

- 1:00 p.m. **Greetings and Opening Prayer**
The Rev. Dr. Daniel W. Selbo, Bishop
- 1:10 p.m. **Introductory Lecture**
Dr. David Luy
A Remedy for the Mind and a Gymnasium for the Soul:
Why Theology Conferences are Good, but Not Enough for What
Ails Us
- 1:30 p.m. **Lecture I**
Dr. Bob Benne
Diversity, Inclusivity, and Equity: The New Trinity that
Undermines Christian Anthropology and What the Church Can
Do About It
- 2:45 p.m. Break
- 3:00 p.m. **Lecture II**
Dr. Gilbert Meilaender
A Blessing Love Gives Into Our Arms: the Meaning of
Procreation
- 4:15 p.m. **Lecture III**
Dr. Mickey Mattox
Ratzinger v. Luther? Logos, Cosmos, Anthropos
- 5:30 p.m. **North American Lutheran Seminary Reception or
On your own; Free Evening**

Wednesday, August 9

- 8:30 a.m. **Opening Prayer**
- 8:45 a.m. **Lecture IV**
Dr. Paul Blowers
A Christoform and Cruciform Cosmology: The Shaping of the
Doctrine of Creation in the Early Church

10:00 a.m.	International Responses
10:30 a.m.	Break
10:50 a.m.	Speaker's Forum
11:30 a.m.	Closing Prayer
11:45 p.m.	Lunch (Included in registration fee for Braaten-Benne Lectures)

BRAATEN-BENNE CHAIR

THE REV. DR. NATHAN H. YODER

Director of Lutheran Studies, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary (Charlotte)



Pastor Yoder graduated with his Ph.D. degree from the University of Regensburg (Germany) in 2011. Yoder also holds the S.T.M. degree from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary (2009), and the M.Div. degree from the Wake Forest University School of Divinity (2002).

Yoder has been heavily involved in the NALC since 2011. He currently serves on the Commission on Theology and Doctrine, as a member of the Lutheran Theologians for the Church (formerly called the “Younger Theologians Colloquium”) and former dean of the Catawba Valley Mission District. He is also a member of the NALC Life-to-Life Discipleship team.

GUEST LECTURERS

DR. BOB BENNE

Jordan-Trexler Professor of Religion Emeritus and Research Associate in Religion and Philosophy, Roanoke College



Dr. Robert Benne is the Jordan-Trexler Professor of Religion Emeritus and Research Associate in the Religion and Philosophy Department of Roanoke College in Salem, Virginia. He has taught for 58 years and is currently Professor of Christian Ethics for the online

Institute of Lutheran Theology based in Brookings, SD. In 1982 he founded the Roanoke College Center for Religion and Society, which the College named in his honor in 2012.

He was Jordan-Trexler Professor of Religion and Chair of the Religion and Philosophy Department at Roanoke College for 18 years. Before that he was Professor of Church and Society at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago for 17 years. A native of Nebraska and a graduate of Midland University, his graduate degrees are from the University of Chicago. He has lectured and written widely on the relation of Christianity and culture. Two of his fourteen books are relevant to the discussion below: *The Paradoxical Vision: A Public Theology for the Twenty-first Century* (Fortress Press, 1995) and *Good and Bad Ways to Think about Religion and Politics* (Eerdmans, 2010). Bob and his wife, Joanna, have been married sixty-four years. They have four children and eight grandchildren.

DR. PAUL BLOWERS

Dean E. Walker Professor of Church History, Emmanuel Christian Seminary



Dr. Paul Blowers is the Dean E. Walker Professor of Church History. He is a scholar of patristics and early Christianity and has written also on the Stone-Campbell heritage. He is a former president of the North American Patristics Society and associate editor of the *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, and in 2017-18 was a Henry Luce III Fellow in Theology.

His authored and edited works include *Visions and Faces of the Tragic: The Mimesis of Tragedy and the Folly of Salvation in Early Christian Literature* (2020), *Maximus the Confessor: Jesus Christ and the Transfiguration of the World* (2016), *Drama of the Divine Economy: Creator and Creation in Early Christian Theology and Piety* (2012), *Exegesis and Spiritual Pedagogy in Maximus the Confessor* (1991). He is co-editor of *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Biblical Interpretation* (2019) and has two works of translation of early Christian texts, *Moral Formation and the Virtuous Life* (2019), and *On the Cosmic Mystery of Jesus Christ: Selected Writings of St. Maximus the Confessor* (2003).

He also has articles in the *Journal of Early Christian Studies*, *Vigiliae Christianae*, *Studia Patristica*, *Pro Ecclesia*, *Church History*, *Modern Theology*, and *Studies in Christian Ethics*. He has also produced long essays for *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*, the *Cambridge History of*

Christianity, The Oxford Handbook to Maximus the Confessor, and The Oxford Encyclopedia of Biblical Interpretation. He edited and translated *The Bible in Greek Christian Antiquity* (1997) and was a general editor of *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement* (2004). Paul and his wife Sandy, a nurse and teacher, have four children and sixteen grandchildren.

DR. DAVID LUY

Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, North American Lutheran Seminary



Dr. David Luy is the Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at the North American Lutheran Seminary in Ambridge, Pennsylvania. He has published a book entitled *Dominus Mortis: Martin Luther on the Incorruptibility of God in Christ* (Fortress, 2014), has contributed to various theological journals and encyclopedias (e.g., *Luther Digest, The International Journal of Systematic Theology, Modern Theology, The Oxford Encyclopedia of Martin Luther, and the Oxford Handbook of Deification*), and is currently at work on a monograph project entitled *The Fate of Christocentrism in Modern Theology* (Oxford University Press). In his spare time, Dr. Luy enjoys music, reading, hiking, and fishing.

DR. MICKEY MATTOX

Flack Family Foundation Chair and Professor of Theology, Hillsdale College



Dr. Mickey Mattox is Flack Family Foundation Chair and Professor of Theology at Hillsdale College. His interests include Martin Luther, the history of biblical exegesis, the doctrine of creation, and ecumenical theology. He is a member of the Academy of Catholic Theology and the International Congress for Luther Research. His authored and edited books include *Luther at Leipzig* (Brill, 2019), *Iohannes Oecolampadius: An Exposition of Genesis* (Marquette, 2013), *Changing Churches* (Eerdmans, 2012), and *Defender of the Most Holy Matriarchs* (Brill, 2003). Mattox is Deputy Editor of *Reformation & Renaissance Review*. He was Associate Editor for the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Martin Luther* (2017) and is a contributing translator for *Luther's Works* (CPH). He is presently writing a book on Luther's cosmology entitled *Sacred Cosmos: Martin Luther's Medieval Catholic Worldview*. He and his wife Pamela are members of St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Hillsdale, MI.

DR. GILBERT MEILAENDER

Senior Research Professor of Theology, Valparaiso University



Dr. Gilbert Meilaender is Senior Research Professor at Valparaiso University. He taught at the University of Virginia (1975-78), at Oberlin College (1978-96), and at Valparaiso University (1996-2014), where he held the Duesenberg Chair in Christian Ethics. He holds the M.Div. (1972) from Concordia Seminary (St. Louis) and the Ph.D. (1976) from Princeton University.

Dr. Meilaender is the author of many books and articles in the field of Christian ethics. Among his books are *Friendship: A Study in Theological Ethics*; *Bioethics: A Primer for Christians*; *The Way that Leads There: Augustinian Reflections on the Christian Life*; *Not by Nature but by Grace: Forming Families through Adoption*; *Thy Will Be Done: The Ten Commandments and the Christian Life*; and (an edited volume of readings) *Working: Its Meaning and Its Limits*. He is co-editor (with William Werpehowski) of the *Oxford Handbook of Theological Ethics*. He has served on the Board of Directors of the Society of Christian Ethics, as an Associate Editor of *Religious Studies Review*, as a Consultant Editor of *Studies in Christian Ethics*, and as an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Religious Ethics*.

Professor Meilaender's work in the area of bioethics is well known. He is a Fellow of the Hastings Center and was a member of the President's Council on Bioethics from 2002 to 2009.