

Inaugural summer workshop propels conversation

The first summer BioLogos Conference, titled “A Dialog on Creation,” drew diverse participants to Gordon College’s campus in Wenham, Mass., on June 9 – 12 for a three-day program sponsored by the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities focusing on issues related to origins and the harmony of science and faith. The senior staff of The BioLogos Foundation – Darrel Falk, Karl Giberson and Pete Enns – led the workshop sessions and Claudia Beversluis, provost of Calvin College, shared her vision for Christian higher education and Calvin’s journey navigating science curriculum in Wednesday night’s opening lecture.

“I made some great friends, heard some wise words, and hope to collaborate with these folks in the years to come. It was a memorable and remarkable meeting.”

Michael Buratovich, Spring Arbor University

The next morning Giberson provided over 50 attendees a historical background in his talks “The Creation-Evolution Controversy: How did we get into this mess?” and “The Creation-Evolution Controversy: Can we get out of this mess?” Enns followed with talks on the Old Testament, including “Thinking about the Bible and Evolution,” and several question and answer sessions. In “Theistic Evolution and Evangelical Christianity two decades from now: Can they co-exist?” Falk presented a model for viewing



Pete Enns speaks to attendees about the book of Genesis

evolutionary-creation, a term to replace theistic-evolution. He concluded the conference with the talk “Strategies for Change: Are they different when the banner over us all is love?”

Those who stayed on campus Friday afternoon could attend a writer’s roundtable discussion led by author Jo Kadlec from Gordon College. Giberson, Enns and Rachel Held Evans shared their experiences of writing and getting their work published. Others chose to sightsee in downtown Boston, explore the quiet fishing port of Gloucester or go on a whale watch. “We saw three juvenile humpback whales and three adult whales,” said Michael Buratovich, a professor at Spring Arbor University. “The weather was perfect – no wind, gentle swells and lots to see. None of us who went will ever forget it.”

Participants ranged from professors of biology and chemistry to graduate students to scholars interested in the mission of BioLogos, and through coffee breaks and relaxed meal times

a sense of community developed. “It can be discouraging to talk about evolution with fellow Christians, for all sorts of reasons,” said Calvin College professor Stephen Matheson. “To be among a group of people who are uncompromising in their commitment to Christ but unafraid to confront the inadequacy of many of our modern conceptions of biblical faith was encouraging and energizing to an extent that I struggle to convey with words. The conference was one of the five formative spiritual experiences of my life so far.”

“I am looking forward to more opportunities through BioLogos to develop a deeper sense of how better to reflect God’s true nature and our true nature to my family, church, students, colleagues and friends.”

Ron Whiteman, doctoral student in cognitive neuroscience

Conference participants come from diverse backgrounds

See how the BioLogos mission is affecting their lives



Aaron Sathyanesan is working toward his doctorate in neuroscience at the University of Maryland. He came to the conference to meet the senior staff of BioLogos and hear them speak about evolutionary creation as part of a larger Christian worldview.

“I have been following Francis Collins’ work since my days as an undergraduate student in India. He became my guru of sorts after I heard how passionate he was about the Christian faith and how he was a widely respected molecular geneticist,” said Sathyanesan. Through following Collins’ work, Sathyanesan learned about BioLogos, and visiting the website is now part of his daily routine.

The conference gave Sathyanesan the opportunity to openly talk about science and faith with Christian professors and scientists, a rare occurrence in his usual secular academic setting.

“I especially enjoyed the sessions with Pete Enns,” Sathyanesan said. “It really challenged me to do some introspection on how I think about God and the Bible and how that translates into my faith.”

Jane Beers is a biology professor at John Brown University in Siloam Springs, Ark., where she happily takes on the challenge of teaching general biology courses to students from a variety of majors. She has used the material on The BioLogos Forum to help her students navigate tough questions concerning science and faith.

“I’m still wrestling with many of the ideas,” one student told Beers, “but I’m so thankful that I have been given an opportunity to really learn and be challenged. As a Christian, the last thing I want is to be ignorant, and I feel like God has been revealing himself to me in new ways during these discussions.”

Beers appreciated the conference’s open dialogue and she believes Darrel Falk’s approach to teaching science is truly effective.

“One of the things that I took away from the conference was a confirmation in the way I have chosen to handle the topic of science and faith in my classes,” said Beers.

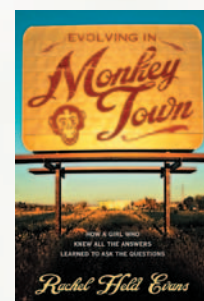


Rachel Held Evans is an avid blogger and author of *Evolving in Monkey Town*, a spiritual memoir about growing up in Dayton, Tenn., home of the famous Scopes Trial. She often directs friends and readers of her blog to The Questions section of The BioLogos Forum.

“I suppose the good people at The BioLogos Foundation know there are a lot of Christians out there like me,” Evans wrote on her blog before attending the conference, “Christians who want to honor God and make sense of the universe he created, but who aren’t biblical scholars or biologists or physicists.”

While at the conference, Evans shared her experiences as a writer at a roundtable discussion with Karl Giberson and Pete Enns. “The funny thing is, I’ve evolved further than the end of this book,” she said, alluding to the theme running through *Evolving in Monkey Town* and her blog – how faith survives by continually changing.

After the conference Evans posted “13 Things” she learned, including that it is possible to discuss the origins debate with respect and humility. “Peter Enns, Darrel Falk and Karl Giberson exemplified this beautifully in their lectures by critiquing the ideas of those with whom they disagree without challenging their opponents’ commitment to their faith,” wrote Evans. “This is the first time I’ve been a part of this conversation in which the ‘other side’ was not reduced to a caricature. It was refreshing and convincing.” Evans continues to be optimistic about the future relationships of the science and faith communities.



Student interns explore science-faith dialogue

This summer The BioLogos Foundation offered Christian college students the chance to engage in the BioLogos community through research and editorial internships. Each intern assists with website content and works on individual projects tailored to their interests.

Carissa Schutz, who recently earned a bachelor's degree in English from Eastern Nazarene College in Quincy, Mass., joined BioLogos in January to compile and edit a fundraising booklet. Since then she has written news stories for both the website and newsletters and most recently helped coordinate the summer workshop at Gordon College.

"Seeing so many scientists and professors passionate about their work and faith inspires me to work harder in my own life," says Schutz. "This internship has been challenging and energizing at the same time."

Three students from Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego, Calif.,

are helping with long term tasks like organizing the site's increasing number of blogs, drafting a glossary of terms for the Questions section, and talking with other young people about how BioLogos can reach the college demographic, all while undertaking a research project centered around responding to Intelligent Design.

Quinn Yost, a senior biology major and aspiring dentist, is researching the malaria parasite. He recently interviewed scientists at The Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, Calif., on their thoughts about Intelligent Design. Chris Evans, a junior biology-chemistry major, is researching Richard Lenski's work and how his long-term evolution experiment

relates to the science-faith dialogue. Kelsey Luoma, a senior biology pre-med major, is focused on showing that protein interactions could have evolved in a gradual, step-wise process rather than in a simultaneous combination.

"I admire BioLogos for its sincere commitment to the Bible while recognizing the value of modern science. It has been a much needed encouragement to me as a follower of Christ and a training scientist to see faith and science as two entities in harmony rather than rivalry."

Chris Evans, Point Loma University



(Left to right) Quinn Yost, Chris Evans, Stephen Mapes, Kelsey Luoma

Christian community continues to refute mainstream science we will distance ourselves and make it that much more difficult to reach out to those who need the faith."

This past spring, environmental science major Bethany Beauregard interned for BioLogos to assemble lists of upcoming events, write short stories for the site's News/Events section, and help moderate *Science & the Sacred's* comment sections, while junior journalism major Jenn Charpentier did research for both the Books and Leading Figures section of the website. BioLogos plans to continue working with students throughout the year.

Letter from the President

Throughout the year, The BioLogos Foundation organizes gatherings for the President's Circle, a group of individuals who support our mission by investing \$1,000 or more annually. At the beginning of the summer, President Circle members Tom and Lyn Shields hosted a gathering of Boston area supporters at their beautiful home in Wenham, Mass., with the help of board member Jud Carlberg of Gordon College and his wife Jan.



Tom and Lyn Shields at the Galapagos Islands

Following dinner the BioLogos staff discussed the need for financial support for various projects, including curriculum supplements to help Christian high school teachers actively integrate Biblical and scientific truth in the classroom. The presentation prompted an invigorating dialogue and positive feedback from the attendees.

Randy Scott has plans to host a similar meeting in San Francisco, Calif., in September and the President's Circle will gather for their annual meeting on October 7, 2010 in Washington, D.C.

We are encouraged by the strong support of our President Circle members and we hope the new proposed projects will inspire others to invest in the future of our children's biblical and scientific education.

- Darrel Falk

Website enters second year with a growth spurt

On April 29, the BioLogos Forum celebrated its first birthday by thanking the active community of readers who make the site a success. During its first year, the website saw 300,000 visits from over 146,000 unique individuals, who together viewed over 1.1 million



pages. Since its anniversary, the Forum is on pace for an even stronger second year, recording 75,000 visits and 250,000 page views in less than two months.

The site's blog [Science &](#)

[the Sacred](#) continues to be a popular destination for visitors. Since April 1, the blog has featured over 100 posts on a wide array of topics, from a three-part response to pastor John MacArthur's criticism of the geological principle of uniformitarianism to Pete Enns' continued dialogue on the Genesis creation story to Calvin student Daniel Camacho's letter to Ken Ham explaining why he thinks young earth creationism can be harmful to Christianity. Many posts have become the center for meaningful discussions on the intersection of science and faith, as evidenced by the over 7,000 comments shared in the last three months.

BioLogos continues to offer resources beyond daily blog posts. Six new

scholarly essays are available to the public, including Kenton Sparks' essay on Biblical inerrancy, Francis Beckwith's critique of Intelligent Design, Steven Benner's explanation on the role of scientists in society and Ard Louis' exploration of miracles and science. The Questions section has also expanded with the latest FAQ, "Does the presence of chance in natural processes conflict with belief in God's sovereignty?"

"It's been a real blessing seeing the site go from 10,000 visits a month to over 40,000," said webmaster Stephen Mapes. "As we continue to add new content and features, I hope even more people will come to view The BioLogos Forum as a welcoming center of discussion for the core issues of science and faith."

Anticipated curriculum launch draws near

Biology teachers at Christian high schools are challenged with presenting sound scientific information to students while being sensitive to the theological implications and their students' faith journeys. Many teachers choose secular biology textbooks that are strong on content but devoid of discussion on a Christian worldview. These teachers spend considerable time gathering additional resources that will help students understand the relationships between science and religion, the domains and limits of each, and their proper use and place in understanding the natural world.



that parallel standard secular biology textbooks and present a Christian perspective on each subject area.

The goal of the curriculum project is to develop, test and disseminate resources that will present a Christian worldview narrative on each topic covered in the standard curriculum. The resources will identify apparent conflicts between science and Christian faith, present strategies for integrating scientific understanding with faith and address growing concerns about disparities between accepted scientific explanations of the living world and the explanations often presented in Christian education.

The curriculum project is now in the fundraising phase, and a full proposal is currently under consideration by a major trust while a preliminary proposal has been selected by a second foundation for submittal of a full proposal. The time scale for this project is two years, and BioLogos anticipates funding decisions before the end of 2010.

BioLogos is committed to working alongside these teachers and home-school families through the development of curriculum resources. To launch this initiative, BioLogos hosted focus-group meetings with biology teachers, Christian school administrators and home-school parents who indicated the greatest need is for adjunct materials and resources

Upcoming Events

July 30-August 2, 2010

American Scientific Affiliation presents:



October 26-28, 2010

Hill Country Institute for Contemporary Christianity presents:



November 9-11, 2010

The BioLogos Foundation presents: "In Search of a Theology of Celebration II" New York City

