

GROWING U | September 23, 2018 – December 16, 2018

Welcome to the Fall portion of the 2018 year of life-long learning.

Growing U is an educational opportunity for adults to deepen their relationship with Jesus as they intentionally journey into the character of Christ.

Spiritual Formation Committee



SEPTEMBER 23, 30 & OCTOBER 7, 2018

FROM SLAVERY TO WHAT?

What is Exodus all about?

Have you read beyond Exodus 15? What do those tabernacle building instructions do for me? And Why did God harden Pharaoh's heart? During the course of these three sessions, attendees will have the opportunity to explore those questions in a three part series:

Session 1: Oppression or persecution? (Exodus 1-2; 40)

Session 2: If not in Egypt, then where do you live? (Exodus 3-24)

Session 3: Good but not safe? (Exodus 25-39)

- T. E. Fretheim, *Exodus*
- O. Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World*
- A. C. Leder, *Waiting for the Land*

Dr. Arie C. Leder was born in the Netherlands and immigrated to Canada. He is a Professor of Old Testament Studies at Calvin Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He previously served as pastor at Ebenezer Christian Reformed Church, Trenton, Ontario, and with Christian Reformed World Missions in Latin America.



OCTOBER 14, 2018

FREED FOR WORSHIP

What reason did Moses give to Pharaoh as to why the Israelites needed to leave Egypt?

In the Book of Exodus, we see that God redeemed his people to celebrate relationship with him; a relationship that is characterized by God's presence, defined by his word, and mediated through sacrifice (Exod 3:12, 18; 24:1-11). This pattern of worship on Mt. Sinai finds expression in the Lord's Table as well.

- Allen P. Ross, *Recalling the Hope of Glory: Biblical Worship from the Garden to the New Creation*
- John W. Hilber, "Theology of Worship in Exodus 24" *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 39 (1996): 177-189. (available online at http://www.etsjets.org/files/JETS-PDFs/39/39-2/39-2-pp177-189_JETS.pdf)



After 15 years in pastoral ministry, **Dr. John Hilber** pursued a PhD in Old Testament and ancient Near Eastern Studies at the University of Cambridge and now serves as a professor of Old Testament at Grand Rapids Theological Seminary. He has authored or edited three books as well as numerous articles relating ancient Near Eastern backgrounds to the Old Testament. John has been married to his wife, Charlotte, for 37 years and they have one adult daughter living in Toronto.

OCTOBER 21, 2018

SERMON DISCUSSION AND FELLOWSHIP

OCTOBER 28, 2018

LIVING THE SABBATH

What does it mean for Christians to “keep the Sabbath”? What is the significance of the Sabbath in Exodus/the Old Testament and how can that inform our practice of Sabbath today? What are some practical steps we can take to more fully receive the gift of Sabbath?

“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy... For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day (Ex. 20:8, 11).” Nestled at the heart of the Ten Commandments in Exodus and reiterated throughout Scripture is the invitation to enter into God’s sabbath rest. But in a 24/7 world where life is busy and we are constantly “on call,” what does sabbath rest look like? In this session, we will explore the significance of Sabbath for ancient Israel, reflect together on how the Old Testament theology of Sabbath can inform our own understanding of what it means to enter into God’s rest, and share practical ideas for more fully embracing the gift of Sabbath.

- Walter Brueggemann, *Sabbath as Resistance: Saying No to the Culture of Now*
- Norman Wirzba, *Living the Sabbath: Discovering the Rhythms of Rest and Delight*
- Lauren F. Winner, *Mudhouse, Sabbath: An Invitation to a Life of Spiritual Discipline*



Amanda Benckhuysen is Professor of Old Testament at Calvin Theological Seminary where she teaches, among other things, a course on the Sabbath. When she is not teaching, meeting with students or writing, Amanda enjoys sabbathing with her husband and two teenage daughters.

NOVEMBER 4, 2018

CREATION & THE TABERNACLE

What is the significance of the parallels between the creation and tabernacle stories?

How is the tabernacle story good news for the world?

Together we will explore the connections between the stories of creation (especially Genesis 1) and the tabernacle. Tracking these connections draws attention to key themes, including the purpose of creation, the role of humans as co-creators, and how there is good news for the entire world.

- Gary A. Anderson, *Christian Doctrine and the Old Testament: Theology in the Service of Biblical Exegesis*
- Peter Enns, *Exodus. NIV Application Commentary*
- Terence E. Fretheim, *Exodus. Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*



Reverend Sarah Schreiber is an Associate Professor of Old Testament at Calvin Seminary. She is also the Associate Pastor at Grace CRC here in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Sarah is married and is the mother to two young boys.

NOVEMBER 11 & 18, 2018

THE ALLURING WILDERNESS: SPIRITUAL FORMATION FROM EXODUS

In Hosea 2:14 the Lord speaks of Israel’s time in the wilderness with fondness. The Lord says, “Therefore I am now going to allure her; I will lead her into the wilderness and speak tenderly to her.” What’s so good about the “wilderness” anyway? How do we experience “wilderness” in our spiritual journey? Is it possible to recognize God at work in the “wilderness?” This will be a two-part session with Pastor Mike.

Pastor Mike Hoogeboom has been the Minister of Outreach at LaGrave for 15 years. He and Lisa have 3 grown children and two granddaughters. The ministry question that keeps him awake at night and animates his day-to-day ministry is “How can our congregation be a blessing for the downtown community?”



NOVEMBER 25, 2018

SERMON DISCUSSION & FELLOWSHIP

DECEMBER 2, 2018

EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITY, AFFORDABLE HOMES AND THRIVING NEIGHBORHOODS: PURSUING HOUSING JUSTICE IN AN ERA OF GENTRIFICATION

How are the trends in the West Michigan real estate market impacting our neighbors on the economic margins?

How can we mitigate the negative impacts of gentrification in our community while supporting reinvestment in historically marginalized neighborhoods?

We know that we are called to love our neighbors and to do justice. The neighbors we've been called to love are experiencing an incredible challenge and risk displacement. Come learn about ICCF's (Inner City Christian Federation's) latest efforts to address the current affordable housing crisis in our community and hear about how LaGrave CRC is joining in.

- BOOK: Matthew Desmond, *Evicted* (For a reading guide visit <http://evictedbook.com/reading-group-guides>)
- VIDEO: *Adam Ruins the Suburbs* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ETR9qrVS17g>
- RADIO Documentary on Grand Rapids housing: <http://stateofopportunity.michiganradio.org/post/pushed-out-documentary-housing-grand-rapids>
- RADIO Story about an ICCF Home in the Baxter Neighborhood that recently sold: <http://michiganradio.org/post/reporter-s-notebook-cash-table-my-house-exemplifies-grand-rapids-housing-boom>



Ryan VerWys started his career with World Renew in 2000, as a community organizer and youth pastor in South Los Angeles. From 2003-2014, he founded and directed a Christian non-profit dedicated ending homelessness through affordable housing, providing employment opportunities, and asset based community development in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods. He was ordained as a Commissioned Pastor in Classis Greater Los Angeles, where he and his wife Rachel started a neighborhood-focused church in Bellflower, CA. In 2014, he moved to West Michigan to become the Operations Director for the Christian Reformed Home Missions Agency, and in 2015 he assumed his current role as CEO of Inner City Christian Federation. Ryan is a graduate of Calvin College as well as a

2003 graduate of the DeVos Urban Leadership Initiative. Ryan and his wife have four children, and he loves practicing hospitality and playing disc golf.

DECEMBER 9, 2018

SINGING THE HYMNS & CAROLS OF CHRISTMAS & ADVENT

DECEMBER 16, 2018

CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTMAS COOKIE DECORATING



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