

COVALENCE MAGAZINE

THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

DarkwoodBrew webcast combines star stuff and theology

March, 2013

A new web series at www.DarkwoodBrew.org is looking at current scientific theories on the creation and evolution of the universe. It has sparked a broad online discussion of science as a way to inform personal faith.

The first lecture in the series, which is in collaboration with the Adler Planetarium and The Clergy Letter Project, featured the science behind the formation of the universe with Dr. Grace Wolf-Chase, astrophysicist at the Adler framing the science and religion dialogue. Bruce Booher, member of the Lutheran Alliance for Faith, Science and Technology and ordained ELCA pastor, discussed his passion for astronomy. He said his sense of awe and wonder inspired by science drives what he shares with others. Booher's viewing parties give people the opportunity to connect with galaxies 70 million light years away. "The light you are seeing there, that little fuzzy ball of light, is hundreds of billions of stars like our sun and that light has been traveling for 70 million years at 186,000 miles per second just under your eye," he said.

Non-profit group WesleyNexus sponsored a viewing of the webcast in coordination with Evolution Weekend, attracting more than 120 participants to the United Methodist Church Baltimore-Washington Conference Mission Center. According to WesleyNexus, the conversation continued in an expert panel. Panelists included Nobel Prize winner Dr. John Mather; Dr. Connie Bertka, co-chair of the Smithsonian Human Origins Project; Rabbi George Driesen, Founder and President of the Institute for Science and Judaism; and Thomas Burnett, who has worked with the BioLogos Foundation team and now the National Academy of Sciences.

Wolf-Chase returned for a second DarkwoodBrew webcast exploring the idea of probability of life on other planets. Another webcast featured Dr. Lea Schweitz, director of the Zygon Center for Religion and Science and member of the Lutheran Alliance for Faith, Science and Technology. She spoke of the relationship between God and humans in the light of evolution.