

May 5, 2015

My fellow Pastors of the Mount Baker Circuit (**MBC**) of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

Dear fellow Pastors,

I request that our circuit officially host a debate, the audience of which would be primarily in-house LCMS, that is, consisting firstly of theologians, Professors, pastors, and lay people of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. I could imagine also opening it up to people outside of our denomination as well. Certainly I would encourage inviting members from across the entire Puget Sound region.

I wish obviously to argue the Old-Earth Creation (**OEC**) position. I consequently request of you that you select both a Young-Earth Creationist (**YEC**) proponent and also the debate moderator. I propose a 2 ½ hour program that would include a break perhaps between the debate proper followed by a half-hour of Q & A. Announcements for this debate should be published everywhere across our Synod, including every single congregation. It should be held on a Sunday, either late in the afternoon or early in the evening. Would you be both in favor of this proposal and personally supportive of my proposal?

I suggest that the debate (if you prefer it could instead be called a conversation), be conducted in a mutually respectful manner which has both the well-being of our LCMS, and the advancement of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in mind. Although I am open to negotiation over the specifics of my proposal, it should entail addressing at least the following three points:

1. What do the highest doctrinal authorities of the LCMS, including God's revealed Word in the Holy Bible (particularly Genesis 1 and 2), together with the Lutheran Confessions, teach about the length of the creation days and the age of the universe?
2. Which two age-of-earth paradigms, YEC on the one hand, and OEC on the other, most fully correlate the biblical creation passages with the facts of nature that are ascertained through scientific investigation?
3. What's at stake? Are questions 1 and 2 relevant in fulfilling the evangelistic mission of the LCMS? If so, how?

I believe you understand that I am convinced that much is at stake with these questions as they pertain to the evangelistic mission of the LCMS. I just had a conversation with a representative of the *Lutheran Hour* who asked me if there was anything she could do for me in her capacity as their emissary. After a bit of thought, I replied to her, "*There are too many people who view me with suspicion. I ask you if I may have a serious hearing with a 'mover-and-shaker' within the Lutheran Hour in order to quell rumors and remove questions concerning my commitment to Holy Scripture.*" That conversation prompted me to issue this very request.

In Christ,

Gary Jensen, Pastor, Zion Lutheran Church, Snohomish, WA
Proofed and grammatically revised on September 13, 2021

Attached: My essay, "The Biblical Demand to Take Another Look: Ten 'Compelling' Exegetical Reasons the Creation Days of Genesis 1 are Non-24-Hour," at my website, www.christianityontheoffense.com

Not one Pastor in the MBC supported my request to publicly debate over the topic that I proposed.