



**“The Great Waters of the Kingdom of Matter”: Faith, Religion, Science, and Reality**

**Abstracts due:** January 20, 2022

**Conference:** Saturday, March 26, 2022

Sponsored by

*Lumen et Vita*

The Graduate Journal of Theology

School of Theology & Ministry

Boston College

Remote and virtual attendance and presenting are possible.

The three best papers (as determined by a panel of judges) will each be awarded \$400.

Prizes are generously funded by the Science for Seminaries initiative of the American Association for the Advancement of Science’s Dialogue on Science, Ethics, and Religion. Boston College’s School of Theology & Ministry received this grant under the leadership of Professor Jessica Black and Professor Dominic Doyle.

More information can be found here:

<https://www.scienceforseminaries.org/school/boston-college-school-of-theology-and-ministry/>

This conference has also been generously supported by a grant from the Boston Theological Interreligious Consortium, of which Boston College School of Theology & Ministry is a member.

More information on the BTI can be found here: <https://www.bostontheological.org>

**A Call for Papers**

**Keynote Speakers:**

Dr. Mary Evelyn Tucker, Ph.D.

Senior Lecturer and Senior Research Scholar

School of the Environment & Yale Divinity School

Yale University

<https://environment.yale.edu/profile/tucker>

Dr. Michael Ferguson, Ph.D.

Instructor in Neurology, Harvard Medical School  
Lecturer on Neurospirituality, Harvard Divinity School  
Neurospirituality Research Director, Center for Brain Circuit Therapeutics  
Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston  
<https://neuromichael.com>

“In the new humanity which is begotten today the Word prolongs the unending act of his own birth; and by virtue of his immersion in the world's womb the **great waters of the kingdom of matter** have, without even a ripple, been endued with life. No visible tremor marks this inexpressible transformation; and yet, mysteriously and in very truth, at the touch of the supersubstantial Word the immense host which is the universe is made flesh. Through your own incarnation, my God, all matter is henceforth incarnate.”

-Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ, “The Mass on the World” in *Hymn of the Universe* (1961)

Faith, Religion, and Science are lenses for viewing reality. Although religious belief and science have long been constructed as being in tension and conflict in Western society, they also work together cooperatively, with mutually-informing perspectives despite different commitments, frameworks, burdens, strengths, limitations, methods, or goals. These tensions and differences in method, however, speak to one another creatively and lead to a greater understanding of reality. Christian theologians have described Faith, Religion, and Reason as aspects of the human experience that assist in the pursuit of truth, and ultimately the search for God. Theologians such as de Chardin have poetically and analytically tried to incorporate the perspectives of science into their theologies. On the other hand, scientists such as Francis Collins (former director of the Human Genome Project and 2020 Templeton Prize Winner) have tried to reconcile personal religious faith with their research. Following such prominent examples of dialogue between these two human areas of inquiry, we seek further conversation and collaboration between these two methods and modalities for encountering reality. Faith, Religion, and Science are embodiments of different human capacities that have much to learn from one another with their own particular perspectives. Sometimes there have been misguided or mistaken attempts to combine them.<sup>1</sup> *Lumen et Vita* seeks to engage and promote learning (in theoretical realms of theology and science and in practical realms such as the social sciences and pastoral practice), dialogue, and collaboration in exploring how these lenses might be used in conjunction to further true knowledge of humanity, creation, and, ultimately, the Divine.

The editors of *Lumen et Vita* invite graduate students to submit abstracts for consideration. Abstracts are selected on a competitive basis.

Potential topics of interest include (but are not limited to):

- Ways in which Science, Faith, and Religion are and/or might be collaborative
- Ethical questions concerning that collaboration
- The relationship between Science, Theology, and Pastoral Care/Ministry

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<sup>1</sup> Pierre Teilhard de Chardin represents this as well, given his interest in eugenics. *Lumen et Vita's* editors do not condone such pseudo-scientific ideologies, but we do see opportunities for criticism and learning in such mistaken, misguided, and harmful attempts at combining science with religion and theology. By honestly assessing the flaws, mistakes, and false notions of figures who have inspired many, we endeavor to more fruitfully bring together Religion, Faith, and Science.

- Scientific Research and Ministry
- Theological foundations for Scientific exploration
- Scientific foundations for Theological inquiry
- Methodological comparisons
- Critical assessment of past views of Science and Religion
- Critical assessment of past thinkers on Science and Religion
- Exploration and discussion of projects and thinkers that encourage collaboration
- Ways that Science and Theology address issues surrounding creation and ecology

Papers by graduate students in theology/ministry and scientific fields are welcome as are those by graduate students in adjacent areas of inquiry (e.g., Philosophy of Science, or Philosophy of Religion). Any and all approaches, theoretical frameworks, vantage points, and experiences are welcome.

Abstracts should be 200-300 words in length and should be sent via email to [lumenetvita@gmail.com](mailto:lumenetvita@gmail.com).

Please include:

- ☐ your name
- ☐ year and degree program
- ☐ school
- ☐ your paper's title
- ☐ and the (sub)disciplinary area in which your proposal falls.

**Applicants will also be asked to disclose demographic information (race/ethnicity, gender, etc.) as diversity of voices in scholarly discourse is a commitment on the part of *Lumen et Vita*. A separate form will be supplied for this purpose to anyone who submits an abstract for consideration.**

**Abstracts of no more than 300 words are due by 11:59 PM on January 20, 2022.**

Final papers are expected to be ca. 7 (double-spaced) pages (approximately 15 minutes) in length to be read on March 26, 2022.

Presented papers will be considered for publication in *Lumen et Vita*'s Spring 2022 Issue.

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