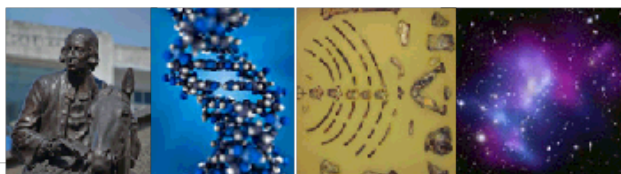


# WesleyNexus

*Science and Religion within the Wesleyan Tradition*



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June 21, 2012

## **Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference Resolution:**

The Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference was presented with another resolution affirming the importance of “rethinking and implementing” evolutionary scientific thinking “into our worship experience, our theological language, our teaching, our songs and life experience.” The resolution was submitted by retired elder Henry F. Schwarzmann. Due to time constraints, the resolution was not brought up for debate or for vote. The resolution can be found [here](#). WesleyNexus will continue to actively promote science and religion issues within the Baltimore-Washington Annual Conference. If you know of any actions being taken in **OTHER** Annual Conferences of the United Methodist Church, or in other Wesleyan churches, please let us know so we can report these actions. In particular, please inform us about any resolutions that have passed with affirmative votes on the floor of any of our Conferences in May and June, and send us a link to the actual texts so we can share the news.

## **Summer Reading:**

Summertime provides an opportunity to catch up on the reading that gets set aside during the rest of the year. While sitting back and turning the pages of a romance novel or a mystery is certainly an enjoyable way to unwind at the beach, the mountains or even the back yard, I hope you will consider taking some time to engage some of the books we have posted in our [review section](#) or that can be found on the Montgomery County Science and Religion Discussion Group [Reading List](#). You may already have a book in mind and if so, please let us know what you are reading so we can list it on our website.

## **We have identified four books to pass the evening hours of summer:**

- In [Christianity After Religion](#) (2012), Diana Butler Bass has written a provocative book on the current dynamics affecting religious institutions and a path towards spiritual awakening that incorporates the insights of this highly scientific, technological society.
- [Science and Spirituality](#) (2010) by Michael Ruse identifies an understanding of faith that can affirm the findings of science while remaining confident about the insights that faith brings to the conversation.
- The subtitle of [Incomplete Nature](#) (2011) by Terrence Deacon is “How Mind Emerged from Matter.” In this book, Deacon tackles what may be the most perplexing issue in the science and religion dialogue. He presents a scientifically based model by which meanings, values and mental capacities can be understood as components of the physical world.
- The monumental theological book [The Beauty of the Infinite](#) (2003) by David Bentley Hart, provides a space for Christian truth in the domain of rhetorical aesthetics. The style of Hart’s writing is quite formidable but, after wading through the first third of the book, one can see a vision of Christianity that is rigorous and insightful.

- A compelling treatment of origins, [The Universe from Nothing: Why there is Something Rather than Nothing](#), by physicist Lawrence M. Krauss, is the fascinating book about how our universe came about. Using the latest in scientific knowledge, his expertise and the innate ability to explain very complex topics in accessible manner earns this book five stars. Lawrence Krauss takes us on an exciting voyage of discovery that helps us understand the universe and further whets our appetite for more knowledge.
- In [Masks of the Universe: Changing Ideas on the Nature of the Cosmos](#), University of Massachusetts Professor of Physics and Astronomy, Edward R Harrison, takes the lay reader on a thought-provoking and learned journey through the epochs of humanity, and our attempt to unravel the workings and the meaning of the many universes which we have created in our image.

### **Book Review:**

Dr. Walt Shropshire reviews the 2009 book [A Science and Religion Primer](#) edited by Heidi Campbell and Heather Looy. This text presents an introduction to the major issues that concerns those involved in the science and religion dialogue.

### **Speaking to Evangelicals:**

T. M. Luhrmann, a Stanford anthropologist, has written a new book called **When God Talks Back: Understanding the American Evangelical Relationship With God.** In the book, she presents the findings of 10 years of research into how charismatic evangelicals perceive the world and their relationship with God. Drawing on that research, Luhrmann addresses the question of why evangelicals and secularists (i. e. Democratic politicians) fail to understand each other in a NY Times article [“Do as I Do, Not as I Say”](#). To communicate with evangelicals, secular Democrats (and those in the religious mainstream for that matter) need to understand that evangelicals focus on “what kind of person they are trying to become — what humans could and should be, rather than who they are.” By learning to talk together, “Democrats could speak to evangelicals more effectively if they talked about how we could develop our moral character together as we work to rebuild our country.”

### **On TV – Through the Wormhole:**

It is frequently difficult to find TV programming worth spending one’s time watching. The Science Channel on cable has developed a wonderful series that addresses this deficiency. Now in its third season, “Through the Wormhole,” narrated by Morgan Freeman, presents high quality production with intellectually stimulating topics such as “Is the Universe Alive?” and “What Makes Us What We Are?” The new season began on June 6th. For more information, see the [program’s web page](#).

### **Marcelo Gleiser:**

Marcelo Gleiser, Appleton Professor of Natural Philosophy and Professor of Physics and Astronomy at Dartmouth College has written a new book titled *A Tear at the Edge of Creation: A Radical New Vision for Life in an Imperfect Cosmos*. He has posted a video that summarizes the main ideas in his book. <http://www.dartmouth.edu/~mgleiser/> Marcelo Gleiser blogs on the NPR Science Blog website 13.7 which can be found on the links area on WesleyNexus [http://www.wesnex.org/H\\_Links.html](http://www.wesnex.org/H_Links.html). A recent blog by Gleiser, “A Brief History of Nothing”, can be found [here](#).

### **Voyager 1**

And speaking of the “edge of creation,” we came across a Daily Mail article about the Voyager 1 (remember that from the 70s?) which is now at the edge of our solar system and still sending signals to NASA. The newspaper's source seems to be The Atlantic, but the Daily Mail has better diagrams of

what the outside edge of the solar system is like. Here are links to both: 1) [Atlantic](#), 2) [Daily Mail](#).

God Bless,  
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