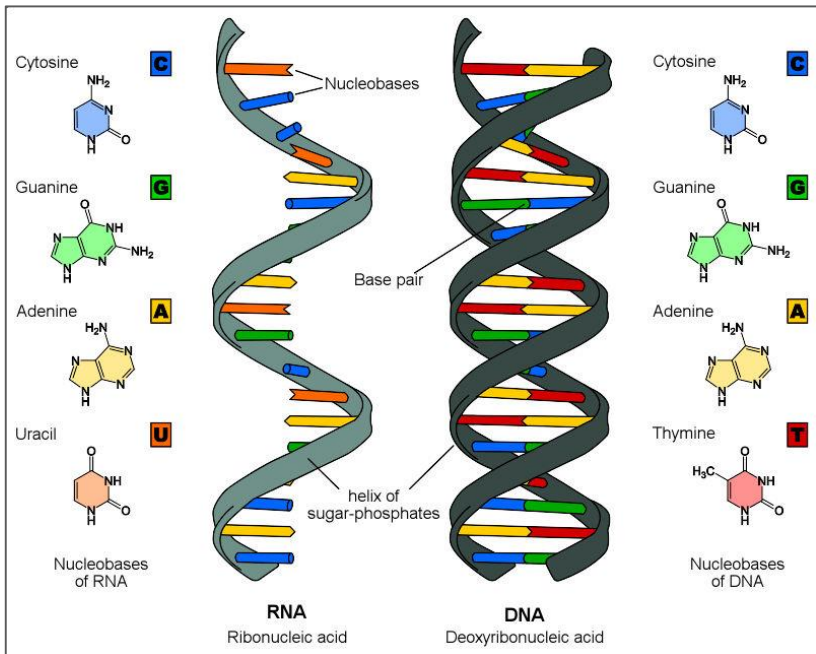


# LSI Journal

*a forum for diverse views consistent with Scripture*

## Creation / Evolution

*a Confessional Lutheran view*



- Code Systems -Evidence a Creator
- Report -WELS Creation Survey
- Age of the Universe
- Evolution's Tree of Life
- Want Your Faith to Grow?

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## New Features

This issue introduces new regular features. Every issue will have a devotion. Other new features may appear less frequently.

- **Devotion:** Meditation on God's Word.
  - **Feedback:** Comments from our readership.
  - **Know Evolution:** Basic concepts of evolution are presented and compared to the truth of creation.
  - **Q&A:** Questions answered on the LSI Q&A webpage.
  - **Evolutionists Say Amazing Things:** A look at remarkable statements by evolutionists.
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## Next Issue

The feature article in the coming Spring 2016 LSI Journal will be *The Narrow Lutheran Middle Road For Creation*:

There is a narrow Lutheran middle road regarding Creation. Let's travel that narrow road while not falling into the ditches on either side. The ditch on one side incorrectly sees arguments from reason as able to aid in creating or sustaining faith. The ditch on the other side incorrectly sees no place at all for arguments from reason in our apologetic (in our defense of the faith).

The Q&A column in our next Journal will be about starlight. Starlight travel time is one issue that at first seems to contradict a young universe. How can we see distant star light which appears to have taken billions of years to reach earth? We will take a brief overview of what God reveals in Scripture and look at several suggested scientific explanations.

## Survey Report

*We have already received many comments about the 28 page Survey Report (see condensed report on page 13). A few are shown below.*

*—editor*

I appreciate your work greatly. Believe it or not evolution is becoming an important issue in Nepal. For the longest time it was not. Now the men in Nepal are telling me that it is harming the faith of many of the young people. The poison that harmed America is coming here.

*Counselor to Nepal*

If we could produce some quality material to be used in grade schools, Sunday schools, and adult Bible classes, that would be a tremendous service to God's Kingdom. This past Sunday I just used a couple of videos from Ken Ham and his group. I would much prefer ours.

*Pastor Paul Mueller*

Thank you so much for this survey and all the work you have put in on this topic. I am emergency teaching religion at one of our Area Lutheran High Schools right now. We started studying creation and evolution today. I appreciate your hard work. Please continue with it.

*Pastor Noah Headrick*

You definitely demonstrate the need for clarification and distinction of terms and ideas. I want to commend you and your efforts in our Lord's vineyard. May they contribute to more precise understanding and communication of our Lord's message from our lips.

*Pastor Bob Hochmuth*

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*Send your comments to Lutheran Science Institute, 13390 W. Edgewood Ave., New Berlin WI 53151 (or [office@LutheranScience.org](mailto:office@LutheranScience.org)). Comments should be under 250 words. Longer submissions may be used as a guest editorial. Not all comments received can be used.*

## Want Your Faith To Grow?

2 Peter 1:3-9 (HCSB) His divine power has given us everything required for life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness. By these He has given us very great and precious promises, so that through them you may share in the divine nature, escaping the corruption that is in the world because of evil desires. For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with goodness, goodness with knowledge, knowledge with self-control, self-control with endurance, endurance with godliness, godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they will keep you from being useless or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. The person who lacks these things is blind and shortsighted and has forgotten the cleansing from his past sins. [*Underlined parts are quoted below.*]

By our human nature we are all rebels against God. We are incapable of doing anything good in God's sight. But God "called us by His own glory and goodness," thus bringing us to believe the Good News that Jesus is our Redeemer. Through that faith we "share in the divine nature, escaping the corruption that is in the world because of evil desires." God gave us that faith, and in doing so He enabled us to choose good and reject evil. God "has given us everything required for life and godliness." God has given us the means to grow our faith (the means to grow in "godliness"). We call those means the "Means Of Grace," (the Word Of God in the Bible, in Baptism, and in Holy Communion). These means convey the "very great and precious promises" and "through them" we grow in faith. Peter also reminds us of some of the qualities we should seek, qualities which please God: goodness, knowledge, self-control, endurance, godliness, brotherly affection, and love.

Do you desire a stronger faith that Jesus is your Savior? Do you want a stronger faith in other Biblical teachings such as creation? Then look to the Means Of Grace. How often do you use the means God has provided to strengthen your faith? Do you take the Lord's Supper every time it is offered (or do you let the ushers pass by and plan to take it next time)? If not every time, how come? Do you usually attend weekly worship and Bible study? Do you read Scripture and/or a devotion on Scripture regularly on your own?

Christians who minimize their use of the Means Of Grace are "blind and shortsighted." They have "forgotten" what Jesus has done for them. They risk losing their faith. Noticing that nature supports creation and so often goes against evolution can minimize the temptation of evolution, but look to the Means Of Grace to strengthen your faith. God's Word in Scripture and Sacrament are the only means God has chosen for bringing us to saving faith and for strengthening that faith.

Let us pray using words based on Hebrews 12:1-2 (HCSB):

LORD, lead us to always keep our eyes on your promises, especially on Jesus. Jesus is the source and perfecter of our faith. Jesus lived a sinless life in our place. Jesus died on the cross as a complete and final payment for our sins. Finally, Jesus rose back to life and now sits at the right hand of God's throne. Remind us of this every day as we run life's race. Keep us free from sin which so easily ensnares us. Keep our eyes on Jesus. AMEN

*MSB*

*To read more see pages 147-153 of The People's Bible, James; 1,2 Peter; 1,2,3 John; Jude. Available from [www.nph.net](http://www.nph.net)*

# Code Systems Evidence a Creator and Declare the Glory of God

*Richard W. Stevens*

Released on Christmas Day, 2014, *The Imitation Game* movie compellingly portrayed the difficulties faced by codebreakers during World War II. The Nazi German military had developed a code system, called Enigma,<sup>1</sup> for sending information and directions to its field units and ships. The movie presents a somewhat fictionalized account of the work of Alan Turing and the team of codebreakers who successfully developed a machine to decode the Germans' messages. The breaking of Enigma is considered among the top accomplishments leading to Allied victory in the War.<sup>2</sup>

Consider now that the field of code-making and code-breaking, formally called cryptography, unveils fundamental evidence of intelligence.

Step One for the British cryptographers in World War II: Receive the German military's radio message. Immediately then the cryptographers started working to convert the message's sequence of characters into its original meaningful German text. *Notice what everyone presumed:*

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<sup>1</sup> One renowned authority states "a code refers to a cryptosystem that deals with linguistic units [only]: words, phrases, sentences, and so forth. ... [In contrast,] [c]iphers are useful for any circumstance. If your code has no entry for 'ANTEATERS,' then you can't say it. [But you] can say anything with a cipher." Bruce Schneier, *Applied Cryptography: Protocols, Algorithms, and Source Code in C*. 2nd ed. (New York: Wiley, 1996), 9. For simplicity, the term "code" is used in this article as synonymous with "cipher," and consistent with a common dictionary definition. "code." Dictionary.com., s.v. "code," accessed April 27, 2015, <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/code> (Random House, Inc. (definition 1).

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.bletchleypark.org.uk/content/hist/worldwartwo/enigma.rhtm>

- The received string of characters was a coded message.
- The original message was in German text and military abbreviations.
- The message had a meaning for the sender.
- The message's (encrypted) meaning would have the same (decrypted) meaning for the receiver.

Turing and his colleagues in the movie did not once stop to ponder: "Is this a coded message?" No one in the movie's audience would blurt out: "Wait! How do they know the 'message' isn't just random radio noise?"

Those questions don't arise because modern educated humans realize code systems exist and are used all the time. Written and spoken English are code systems, just as are all human languages. Computers exist everywhere, constantly creating, storing, transmitting, receiving and decoding streams of electrical and magnetic charges that carry coded messages. Daily e-commerce operates securely because all of the financial information is communicated via encrypted (encoded) messages.

We don't stop to think about codes, and that leads to our ignoring their immense importance to our worldview. A code system (formally, a "cipher") is found when there exists a systematic way to convert information elements into symbolic forms and then later to convert the symbolic forms back to the original information elements. Using a code system, an initial message can be converted (encoded) into symbols that later can be converted back (decoded) to the initial message.<sup>3</sup>

A traditional example of a code system is Morse code. Roman alphabetic letters and Arabic numerals can be converted to their

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<sup>3</sup> The set of uniquely defined abstract symbols that represent elements of information is the "code." The set of rules that define what structures of symbols are allowed in a coded message is the "syntax." Together, the code and syntax include all symbolic units and properties used to place information in a message. The two together may be called "cosyntics." Werner W. Gitt, *Without Excuse*. (Atlanta, Ga.: Creation Book Publishers, 2011), 40-42.



unique predefined series of “dots” and “dashes,” which are transmitted as short and long tones, respectively. The receiver of a Morse code message decodes the dots and dashes to reconstitute the original letters and numerals.

More modernly, there exists the ASCII chart that underlies computer data storage and transmission.<sup>4</sup> Each Roman letter, Arabic numeral and other special character is represented as a unique series of seven binary digits (usually stored and transmitted electromagnetically). Unicode is an eight bit system that includes ASCII and allows for many more characters to be represented in binary digit code.<sup>5</sup>

### **Because Codes Exist, The “Naturalistic” Explanations Cannot Be True**

The “naturalistic” worldview contends all things can be explained as the results of natural causes and laws.<sup>6</sup> But code systems are everywhere in the modern world. As we come to understand code systems, we see how they confirm the existence of an intelligent creator and thus refute any theory of life originating from undirected natural forces.<sup>7</sup> Military codes, Morse Code, software program “code,” even children’s decoder ringers, all of these point to intelligent creators: human beings. No naturalist or scientist can disagree. Those codes originated from intelligence, so the vastly more complex encoded information within DNA also originated from intelligence, in this case from the Creator God.

Two key facts about codes show that when we find a code system in existence, we have found evidence of an intelligent creator at work.

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<sup>4</sup> [www.ascii-codes.com](http://www.ascii-codes.com)

<sup>5</sup> [www.unicode.org](http://www.unicode.org)

<sup>6</sup> *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (5th ed.), s.v. “naturalism,” accessed Aug. 30, 2015, <https://www.ahdictionary.com/word/search.html?q=naturalism> (4th definition).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Rom. 1:19-20 (God’s invisible attributes are clearly evident to mankind).

**1. Observation:** There are no undirected material forces known that can: (a) create a code; and (b) create the corresponding encoder and decoder devices. With all the scientific knowledge we command, we cannot conceive of a purposeless, undirected process that can design a code and assemble the coding devices.<sup>8</sup> Code systems simply do not occur naturally among the non-living, non-intelligent elements of the universe.<sup>9</sup>

**2. Logic:** A non-intelligent, undirected actor, a Thoughtless Thing, cannot and will not create a code system. Why not? Because creating a code system requires:

- (a) Having a body of information, i.e., a message;
- (b) Creating a conversion scheme that converts elements of the message information into symbols;
- (c) Converting the message into the symbols using the scheme, i.e., actually encoding the message;
- (d) Expecting another entity *in the future* to receive the encoded message; and
- (e) Expecting the receiving entity to decode the message *using the same scheme* and *make a decision or act* upon the content of the message.

None of the five logically necessary elements of encoding and then transmitting encoded information will occur within a Thoughtless

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<sup>8</sup> Indeed, there is no known undirected material force or process that can create a code. This article argues more conservatively to produce irrefutable evidence of intelligent design, i.e., that undirected purposeless forces cannot create the code *and* the corresponding encoder and/or decoder devices.

<sup>9</sup> Donald E. Johnson, *Programming of Life* (Sylacauga, AL: Big Mac Publishers, 2010), 27, 36-37, 48-50, *citing, inter alia*, Albert Voie, "Biological Function and the Genetic Code are Interdependent," *Chaos, Solitons and Fractals*, 28:4 (2006): 1000-1004.

Thing. Being purposeless, unintelligent and undirected, the Thoughtless Thing:

- Won't know it possesses information
- Won't know to create a scheme for encoding information into symbols
- Won't know to convert the information it has into the corresponding code symbols
- Won't know to transmit the encoded message
- Won't foresee an *entity existing in the future* to receive, decode, and/or act upon the message

The hallmarks of intelligent action are *intentional acts* and *expecting or anticipating a future change in conditions because of the intentional acts*. The science of economics, rightly understood, starts with the same premise. The fundamental axiom of economics is that human beings act to make changes in behavior or decisions with the expectation or hope of a changed future condition.<sup>10</sup> There should be no debate about what constitutes intelligent action, at least as humankind understands it.

Without intelligence and action, an entity would never create a code system. Therefore, when a code system is discovered, the first conclusion about its origin should be that it was created by an intelligent entity. As it is unquestioned that DNA and related cell systems use code systems,<sup>11</sup> it follows that the first conclusion about the origin of DNA is: An intelligent actor created it.

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<sup>10</sup> "Action is always directed toward the future; it is essentially and necessarily always a planning and acting for a better future. Its aim is always to render future conditions more satisfactory than they would be without the interference of action." Ludwig von Mises, *Human Action: A Treatise on Economics* (Irvington-on-Hudson, NY: The Foundation for Economic Education, 1996); Library of Economics and Liberty [Online] available from <http://www.econlib.org/library/Mises/HmA/msHmA5.html>; accessed 24 June 2015; Internet. Section I.V.6.

<sup>11</sup> Stephen C. Meyer, *Signature in the Cell* (New York: Harper One, 2009), 113-135, citing, *inter alia*, Jacques Monod, *Chance and Necessity: An Essay on the Natural Philosophy of Modern Biology* (New York: Vintage, 1972), 143; Stephen J. Freeland

## Talk About DNA, The Ultimate Code System, In Your Witness

DNA, the code system that underlies life itself, declares the glory of God. When the question is, “what evidence is there of God,” talking about code systems and DNA can lead to talking about the DNA creator, Jesus, and what he has done for us.<sup>12</sup> While only the Good News about Jesus our Redeemer brings people to faith, DNA can serve as a great discussion starter.

In addition, some Christians are lured by naturalistic scientism and evolution with their claims that there is no creator God. Talk about code systems and DNA with fellow Christians. These subjects reveal the physical evidence of God’s handiwork in ways many believers and non-believers have not considered. Learning how the very existence of code systems points to creative intelligence, and how the DNA code system points to the Creator of all life, can help to dim the attraction of naturalism and evolution.

*Richard W. Stevens holds a computer science degree from UC San Diego, and a J.D. with high honors from the University of San Diego Law School. He has practiced civil litigation in California and Washington D.C., taught legal research and writing at George Washington University and George Mason University law schools.*

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and Laurence D. Hurst, “Evolution Encoded,” *Scientific American*, 290(4) (2004): 84-91.

<sup>12</sup> Romans 1:19-20 (ESV): “For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.”

# Survey of Creation Apologetics Used in the WELS

*A Survey and Report by Mark Bergemann, January 2016*

Nearly 1,000 WELS pastors, teachers, staff ministers, and lay Sunday School teachers completed a creation apologetics survey in fall 2015. The WELS consistently and correctly teaches the Biblical position of a recent creation and a world-wide flood. That said, we do hold various thoughts on how to approach the lie of evolution.

One purpose of this survey was to gather information on how much support various creation apologetic methods have among our called workers and Sunday School teachers. A larger purpose was to encourage a synod-wide discussion of creation apologetics. Opinions and conclusions expressed in this report are those of the report author and are not necessarily the position of LSI. LSI publishes various creationist views which are consistent with Scripture.

This LSI Journal article is a short summary of the full report. The full report contains many important findings NOT in this summary. You are also encouraged to read ALL the comments made by those who took this survey. By reading all of their words you get a fuller understanding of how important creation apologetics are in the eyes of our WELS called workers and Sunday School teachers. Select quotes are in the body of this report. Complete unedited responses are available in Appendix 2. The full report and appendices are available at [www.LutheranScience.org/survey](http://www.LutheranScience.org/survey)

Please send any comments or questions about this survey to Mark Bergemann at [office@LutheranScience.org](mailto:office@LutheranScience.org) or mail to: Lutheran Science Institute, 13390 W. Edgewood Ave., New Berlin WI 53151.

## Principal Conclusions

1. Many or most WELS called workers see evolution as a significant issue for the church.

2. WELS called workers overwhelmingly agree that our schools should teach some of the scientific problems faced by evolution.
3. Many WELS called workers see a need for good creation apologetic materials.
4. There is a wide diversity of creation apologetic methods used by our WELS called workers.
5. Our WELS called workers are split on how to define “science.” One definition sees evolution as science. The other definition sees the exact opposite: evolution is not science.
6. Many WELS called workers have misconceptions about science and evolution.
7. WELS called workers are solidly young earth creationists (YEC).
8. WELS laity who teach Sunday School share these attributes.
9. Many WELS teachers view the effect of science on faith differently than many WELS pastors.

## **How Should the Church Address the Temptation of Evolution?**

735 (75% of 978) respondents answered this question (Q #12). The words of a high school teacher seem to summarize what so many of our called workers answered, “Confront it head on using first God’s clear word and how the world began at creation. Secondly, allow science to be the support for God’s Word, not taking the place of the Word.” A pastor also provides a good summary, “With Scripture, with science, with apologetics, with honest discussion.”

516 respondents (70% of those answering this question) specifically mentioned the Means Of Grace, and 235 respondents (32%) advocated using reason or science. A large portion mentioned both, as do the two quotes above.

Intensity and Candor of Our Response to Evolution Is Emphasized with Words Like:

- Head On; 21 respondents.
- Boldly, Vigorously, Aggressively, Forceful, Unafraid, Not Being Afraid; 11
- Straight On, Straight Forward, Directly; 10.
- Openly, Open Discussion, with Openness; 8.
- Honestly, with Honesty, Frankly, with Frank Discussion; 8.

Important Issue for Many

It is clear that addressing the temptation of evolution is important to many respondents, based on their extensive suggestions on how to deal with evolution. Several dozen went even further and verbalized how very important it is from their viewpoint.

A pastor writes, “I am VERY THANKFUL that a group like this [LSI] exists in our synod, as I believe this kind of work is SUPER important (and I do a lot of work with young people, so I think that opinion has some validity).” [Capitalization in original.]

An MLC professor emails, “Thanks for allowing me to respond to your survey. As stated previously, I do believe it is a good step in prompted dialogue on this campus and elsewhere.”

A Teacher answers Q #12 (How Should the Church Address the Temptation of Evolution?), “By doing just that. Addressing it. They should not remain silent and ignore the elephant in the room for what is being taught everywhere else in society.”

A high school teacher with a biology degree writes, “This is an essential topic that we MUST address with our young people in a compelling way that shows we fully understand the science.” [Capitols in original.]

A lay person with a degree in physics writes, “This was a good survey. I’ll spread this. Thank you. This is a subject the church needs to address, and I’m glad to see this. God bless.”

Some survey respondents gave contact information which resulted in email discussions. After we discussed the diversity of creation apologetics used in the WELS, one WELS teacher wrote, “Blessings on your endeavors. Your work indicates a need for a clearly articulated statement in the WELS.”

### Unimportant Issue for Few

Very few respondents minimized the need for the church to address the temptation of evolution.

A pastor answered how to address evolution, “By assigning it a fairly low priority. We have much bigger fish to fry. I don’t like the idea of being part of the ‘anti-evolution’ denomination (or the ‘anti-gay marriage’/ ‘anti-scouting’/ anti-anything denomination). I want my denomination’s identity to be based on the grace of God and the person of Jesus.”

### Opposing the Use of Science in Our Apologetic

I counted 21 whose comments seem to speak against using arguments from reason or science in our creation apologetic. They used restrictive words like “just teach,” or “only use.” I did not count those who answered Q #12 without restrictive words, even when they answered with something like “Teach Genesis,” since so many who said those same things then wrote in the next comment box that we should also use science.

ALL of these 21 respondents agreed (14) or somewhat agreed (7) to Question #22, “Christian schools should teach a few of the scientific problems evolution faces.” Therefore these 21 are not against using reason in apologetics to the extent their comments seem to indicate.

One teacher’s entire comment is, “Only use Bible.”



A pastor writes, “Teach bible doctrine and in no way yield. Stick with bible in basic truths, leave seeming problems to God.”

A lay person answers how the church should respond, “Just teach Gods Word. Be excited and thorough. Read Genesis.”

A pastor states, “To narrow the church's focus to matters of physics or biology seems short-sighted.”

A teacher says, “Present everything from a purely Biblical standpoint. Abstain from arguing or trying to convince others using facts. Let the Bible do the talking and our faith do the believing.”

### Supporting the Use of Science in Our Apologetic

At least 235 respondents advocated using arguments from reason or science in our apologetic.

A pastor states, “My opinion is that we can no longer just ignore the claims made by evolutionary scientists. We need to examine their teachings and offer rebuttals to our people. In short, we need to continue to do Apologetic work in this area.”

A Pastor answers Q #12, “HEAD ON! I start my confirmation class with it every year, because Martin Luther didn't have to deal with Darwinism. All our young people should have memorized how to destroy this deadly theory, before we throw them back out there for school and university. Gospel alone / Holy Spirit brings one to faith - but science can be tool to help build a bridge. Depending upon who you are talking to, creation science can be very important, with others, not so much. A good tool to have in our hands. God bless your work!” [Capitalization in original.]

A pastor suggests, “Present the biblical and scientific evidences for creation in every aspect of the ministry.”

A pastor says, “God's Word, the Bible, has its own power to convince. We also need to answer by critics by sound apologetics that help them stop and think.”

A pastor's entire comment is, “Empower Christians young and old with apologetics.”

A pastor comments, “Your question about science increasing the effectiveness of the gospel is really about apologetics. Apologetics and Science cannot increase the gospel's effectiveness; but apologetics is often necessary to get people to listen to the gospel.”

### Resources Desired

Large numbers of respondents mentioned using books, videos, and websites with creation apologetic information. Many also expressed a need for such resources. The Lutheran Science Institute (LSI) is working to meet that need. For example, our free classroom video compares creation with evolution and shows from Scripture how evolution is incompatible with the Christian faith. [www.LutheranScience.org/video](http://www.LutheranScience.org/video) LSI hopes to develop many more classroom resources in the next few years.

A teacher with over 30 years of experience states, “Provide curriculum materials which are classroom friendly and/or provide access to these materials through preferred websites. Some creation stuff out there isn't that reliable.”

A Pastor answers Q #12, “Good education materials, particularly available for junior high and high school students. Stress the Bible account and show the unscientific evolution position.”

A 20 year veteran grade school teacher states, “I think Lutheran teachers need more resources to combat evolution theory that can be used for their own personal study and also in the classroom. Thank you for this survey and this site which helps do just that!”

A pastor emailed in response to the survey, “Our Sunday Bible class is currently working through the [LSI] Q&A. ...Your email also prompted me to look at your website. ...Thank you for making this excellent material available. I promoted it in our bulletin announcements recently.”

A grade school teacher requests, “Give us the flaws of the evolutionary thinking. ...I don't know the specifics about evolution enough to teach my students the flaws of it.”

### Lutheran Science Institute (LSI)

Of the 274 respondents who wrote in the final comment field, 38 (14%) took the time to thank and/or encourage LSI in its ministry. Several emailed thanks for the survey. Twenty-two also recommended creation apologetic materials from AIG, ICR, and other non-Lutheran creation groups. More than a few were pleased to learn that the WELS has a provider of such resources (LSI).

A pastor emailed in response to the survey, looking for ways to help LSI, “I want to raise the profile of the work of LSI in the congregation.”

A pastor writes, “I am currently using the Q & A sent out by Warren Krug a couple years ago for our Sunday Bible class. Continued sermon, Bible class, confirmation class references are essential.”

A pastor comments, “I appreciate all efforts by Bible-believing scientists to educate pastors on the issue of evolution, so that we don't misrepresent the theory of evolution and lose our credibility as we testify to the truth of Scripture.”

## Misunderstandings About Science

Making false statements about science (or anything else) discredits our entire message. If we make obviously false statements about science, are we also making false statements about the way of salvation? We can all use creation apologetics, but we must be careful to stay within the boundaries of our scientific understanding. Do not present a particular scientific argument unless you are sure it is correct. See “Handling Evolution in Your Witness,” part two of “Witnessing in a World Where Evolution Claims ‘There Is No God.’” A pdf is available on the LSI website: [www.LutheranScience.org/2015witness](http://www.LutheranScience.org/2015witness)

### ONLY a Theory (false)

A large number of survey respondents incorrectly claimed that evolution is ONLY a theory, it is not proven fact. This shows that they are unfamiliar with scientific terms. In science, the term “theory” denotes an explanation which is well accepted (overwhelmingly taken as true) by the scientific community. “Theory” is an end stage in science. Theories never become “facts” or “laws” as additional evidence is found. Scientific theories and laws are never proven with certainty. Any theory or law may be discarded and replaced tomorrow.<sup>13</sup> For example a teacher writes, “I really struggle that if evolution is a theory why is it accepted so matter of fact.”

### Species Equals Kinds (false)

Many survey respondents made comments incorrectly equating the modern scientific term “species” and the biblical term “kind.” Only one out of four called workers correctly answered a question about this (Q #29, see full report). Several pastors and several teachers did correctly mention that most biblical kinds of creatures include many different species. A pastor writes, “I understand species to refer to changes within the Biblical kind. Lions are a species, as are tigers, but they are both the same kind.”

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<sup>13</sup> Science and Creationism: A View from the National Academy of Sciences, NATIONAL ACADEMY PRESS Washington, DC, SECOND EDITION 1999, page 1-2.] A free pdf of this book (pages 12-13 in pdf) is available at: <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/6024.html> (accessed Jan 5, 2016)

No new biblical kind will ever develop, but new species do develop within those kinds. There are dozens of species of cats, but they are probably only one or two biblical kinds, since most cats can interbreed. All of our present day species of land creatures would not have been able to fit into Noah's ark, but all the Biblical kinds (including the dinosaur kinds) would easily have fit.

### Additional Misunderstandings Covered in The Full Report

- Genus Equals Kind (false)
- Different Species in the Same Kind Cannot Reproduce (false)
- Only a Minority Believe Evolution (false)
- Theories Have No Evidence (false)
- Evolution Completely Wrong (false)
- Evolution Is Exclusively Biological Change (false)
- Days Are Exactly 24 Hours (false)
- Evolutionists Don't Know Their Savior (false)
- Darwin Invented Evolution (false)

## **Diversity of Creation Apologetics Used in the WELS**

Creation apologetic methods used in the WELS primarily vary regarding:

1. To what extent and for what purpose should arguments from reason be used?
2. What is and is not "science"?

I have been trying to understand and document the various creation apologetic positions used in the WELS, along with defining a Lutheran position. A February 2012 effort at defining a Lutheran position was "The Place of Reason in Defending the Christian Faith – with ministry ideas regarding creation/evolution"

([www.lutheranscience.org/2012reason](http://www.lutheranscience.org/2012reason)). Continued discussions led to LSI publishing a collection of seven articles by five authors under the title, "Two Creation Apologetics with Opposing Views of Science are

Taught in the WELS,” ([www.lutheranscience.org/TwoApologetics](http://www.lutheranscience.org/TwoApologetics)). In January 2016 LSI published a new paper, “The Narrow Lutheran Middle Road For Creation,” ([www.LutheranScience.org/2016middle](http://www.LutheranScience.org/2016middle)).

Four years of intensive study of creation apologetics used in the WELS, including talking with hundreds of called workers, reviewing more than a thousand articles and books they have written, and lengthy and repeated discussions with many, have led me to this conclusion: I am convinced that WELS called workers hold a proper understanding of the Means Of Grace. Faith is created and strengthened only through the Gospel in Word and sacrament. Each believes their creation apologetic conforms to this Biblical position on the Means Of Grace and to all other doctrines. A common issue is seeing each other's creation apologetic as violating the Means Of Grace, inerrancy of Scripture, or other doctrines. Nothing in this survey leads me to change this conclusion.

It is my opinion that the WELS would greatly benefit by having widespread discussions about creation apologetics. The LSI Board continues to encourage such discussion. I have found that we all seem to have misunderstandings about what other WELS members believe regarding creation apologetics. Learning the views of others is beneficial and can sometimes even lead to revising your own view. During several extended creation apologetic discussions in which I participated, several participants revised the creation apologetic position they had held for decades. Humanly speaking, simply reading an article or two rarely moves a person to revise such a strongly held position. Changing such views often takes extended discussions over a period of time.

Multiple-Choice Questions

The survey included 17 multiple-choice questions. Partial results for three questions are reported below. See the full report for details regarding all 17 questions.

*Question #22: “Christian schools should teach a few of the scientific problems evolution faces.” SW means “Some What.”*

Q #22	AGREE	SW AGREE	SKIP	SW DIS- AGREE	DIS- AGREE
PASTORS	88 %	10 %	1 %	0 %	1 %
TEACHERS	73 %	21 %	2 %	1 %	3 %
TEACH H.S. OR COLLEGE	83 %	15 %	0 %	1 %	2 %
TEACH SUNDAY SCHOOL	77 %	16 %	4 %	1 %	2 %
LAITY	77 %	13 %	4 %	2 %	4 %
ALL	79 %	16 %	2 %	1 %	2 %

The comments of at least 150 respondents advocated teaching evolution to our students. Almost no one spoke against it. This correlated well with the above responses to Q #22.

A common comment was to suggest we teach more than a few problems faced by evolution. A teacher writes, “We should teach more than a few of the scientific problems in evolution.” A pastor responds, “Why just a few problems? There are multiple problems across the board in most areas that science touches. Be ready for them too.”

A teacher answers how the church should respond, “Education! Many in our pews don't have a background of Christian Education or only went to an LES and have forgotten so much. I have had parents ask me on field trips, What is it we believe about that? –when evolution, millions of years, etc. is brought up.”

*Question #18: “Science and the Bible always agree when both are properly understood.” SW means “Some What.”*

Q #18	AGREE	SW AGREE	SKIP	SW DIS- AGREE	DIS- AGREE
PASTORS	57 %	16 %	6 %	5 %	15 %
TEACHERS	38 %	16 %	7 %	14 %	25 %
TEACH H.S. OR COLLEGE	44 %	17 %	6 %	11 %	22 %
TEACH SUNDAY SCHOOL	43 %	14 %	7 %	11 %	24 %
LAITY	36 %	17 %	3 %	15 %	29 %
ALL	46 %	16 %	6 %	10 %	22 %

People making statements like Q #18 are using a non-standard definition of “science” where millions of years is not true science, but is instead pseudoscience science, false science, or so-called science. The comments of at least 74 respondents showed they use a non-standard definition of “science.” Some of these quotes are listed on the following pages of this report.

Some might think that the 231 pastors (57%) who “agreed” with Q #18 are making science into a Means Of Grace, but 172 (74%) of those 231 pastors also agreed that “Science does not in any way increase the effectiveness of the Gospel in bringing souls to faith,” (Q #26). Only 12 (5%) of those 231 pastors disagreed with Q #26. This is essentially the same response rate as all 402 pastors to Q #26 (76% agreed and 4% disagreed).

Note that laity are nearly twice as likely to disagree with Q #18 as pastors (29% of laity disagree, while only 15% of pastors disagree).

Claiming Science and the Bible Agree

A pastor who agreed with Q #18 states his reason, “Science and the Bible always agree when both are properly understood, is a very tricky



question. I selected true, knowing that Scripture leads my interpretation of science and that the ministerial use of reason (as opposed to the magisterial) does not conflict with God's Word."

Another pastor explained his non-standard definition of science which led him to "somewhat agree" with Q #18, "There is no scientific evidence for evolution = true when referring to true science which submits its findings according to God's revealed Word."

A pastor writes, "True science supports the truth of a world created by God."

A pastor states, "True science will always support the Bible; however, not all of the things that are called science today are true science."

### Claiming Science and the Bible Do NOT Agree

A teacher states, "Science and the Bible will not agree in every case in that science cannot explain miraculous acts of God."

Another teacher writes, "Science and the Bible, even when properly understood, will not always agree because not all of the Bible can be grasped by reason."

A teacher says, "The Bible involves miraculous events which cannot be explained scientifically."

Another teacher comments, "Science is a man-made thing that can never be perfect. It will not totally agree with the Bible because it is done by sinful human beings."

**Means of Grace**

God creates and strengthens faith only through the Gospel in the Bible, in baptism, and in the Lord’s Supper, yet more than half our pastors answered in ways which at first seem to include science as a Means Of Grace. How can someone who correctly limits the Means Of Grace to the Gospel (in Word and Sacrament) agree that “Science can strengthen our faith that God created the world?” The answer is in how they define the words of this statement. Many respondents explained their reasoning in the comment fields. Some took this statement in light of Romans 1:18-20 and understood it to mean that observing nature (science) can show believers that God created. Others define “science” in a non-standard way, so that science always agrees with Scripture.

*Question #24: “Science can strengthen our faith that God created the world.” SW means “Some What.”*

Q #24	AGREE	SW AGREE	SKIP	SW DIS- AGREE	DIS- AGREE
PASTORS	34 %	15 %	1 %	9 %	41 %
TEACHERS	49 %	17 %	2 %	7 %	26 %
TEACH H.S. OR COLLEGE	37 %	16 %	1 %	7 %	38 %
TEACH SUNDAY SCHOOL	46 %	16 %	3 %	9 %	26 %
LAITY	46 %	23 %	7 %	8 %	16 %
ALL	43 %	17 %	2 %	7 %	31 %

Pastors were much more likely (58% more) than teachers to disagree with Q #24, “Science can strengthen our faith that God created the world.” Pastors were far more than twice as likely (156% more likely) as laity to disagree with that question. (41% of pastors disagreed, 26% of teachers, and 16% of laity.)

### Concerns Expressed

Large numbers of pastors, teachers, and laity commented about the Means Of Grace questions. A select few comments:

A teacher pleads, “Your next 3 questions [*Q* #24, #25, #26] seem to be placing science on an equal plane with the inerrant Gospel. Please, please, please retain your Lutheranism and make science and reason subservient to the Gospel. The Holy Spirit will use the Means of Grace to bring souls to faith.”

A teacher writes, “Science can be a tool to help one better understand God's Creation, but I hesitate to say it can strengthen one's faith or increase the effectiveness of the Gospel. I do believe Science can break down barriers/walls that evolutionists may put up in the name of Science to try to verify or give validity to their causes.”

A pastor says, “The Gospel is the only means of grace, perfect, complete and powerful. That does not mean that we cannot use examples from nature and reason to give an always inadequate mental picture or example to try to demonstrate what God is saying in his perfect word.”

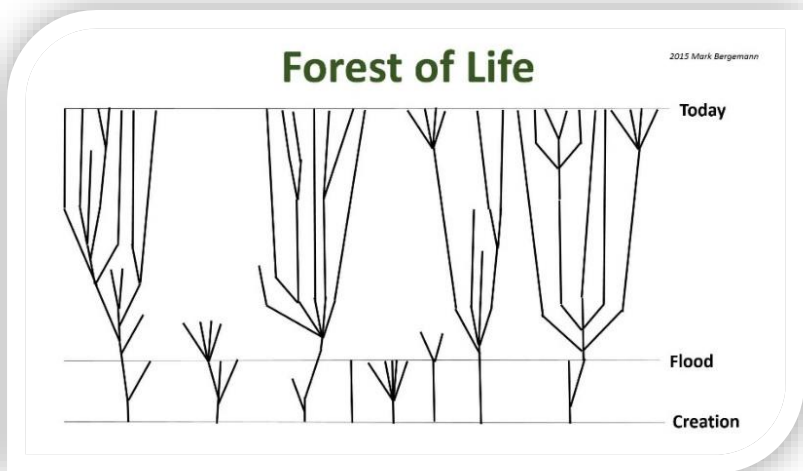
### **Final Thoughts**

It is my hope that this survey will encourage brotherly discussion of creation apologetics in our midst. May that discussion lead each of us to better understand the varied creation apologetic methods used by our brothers and sisters in Christ. Once we understand the positions of others, we can better evaluate our own position.

*Mark Bergemann serves as president of the Lutheran Science Institute and as Evangelism Board chairman at Good Shepherd's Evangelical Lutheran Church in West Allis WI. Mark is a retired electrical engineer and holds a BS from UW Milwaukee.*



of cat species today probably came from just one or two cat kinds on Noah's Ark.



The tree of life in the evolution story takes all the trees from the Forest Of Life (reality) and combines them into a single tree (fabrication)! Here we see the mixture of reality and fabrication. Natural selection (and human selection) really does produce new species, but the evolution story imagines that natural selection can produce new kinds of animals, even though that has never been observed. Fossils show distinct animals with only a handful of very debatable transitional forms (such as a creature that is part bird and part lizard). The evidence that one kind of animal can never change into another kind is so strong, that some evolutionists propose “Punctuated Equilibrium,” the thought that the change from one kind into another kind happened in so few generations that no fossils of the transitional forms exist.

-MSB

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*Q&A*

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*This is one of the questions answered on our LSI Q&A webpage.*

*You are invited to ask a question online or by mailing LSI.*

[www.LutheranScience.org/QA](http://www.LutheranScience.org/QA)

**Young Earth Creationists (YEC) propose 6, 10, or even 25 thousand years as the age of the universe. Are there gaps in the Biblical genealogies?**

This question was asked in June 2015 on our LSI website by a person who had just joined LSI as a Subscriber.

We do not know the exact age of the universe, but God reveals in Scripture that the universe is thousands of years old, not millions or billions (evolution claims 13.7 billion years). Many YEC hold to Ussher's Chronology, which places creation at 4004 BC. Ussher's Chronology (published 1,650 AD) assumes that the Biblical genealogies omit no names and that the Biblical periods of time listed in Scripture are consecutive. Professor John Jeske of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary states that about Ussher's Chronology, shows where Biblical genealogies skipped generations, and then quotes a source implying that creation is probably between 5,000 and 8,200 BC. [www.LutheranScience.org/OTchronology](http://www.LutheranScience.org/OTchronology)

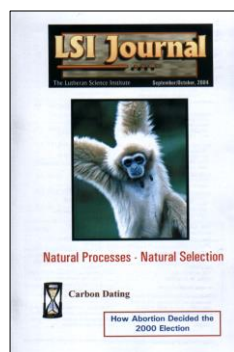
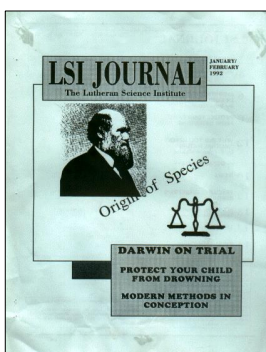
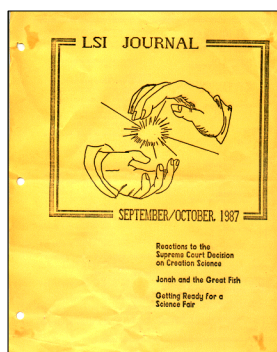
YEC who wish to have the date of creation fit into secular history sometimes go to a creation date as old as 20,000 BC or slightly older. The earliest large civilizations seem to have been in a propaganda war of who had the oldest civilization. Some dating of early history due to that culture war is suspect. Everyone wanted to be the oldest civilization.

Whether creation was 4,004 BC or 20,000 BC, we know for a fact that creation was not millions or billions of years ago. The evolution story requires billions of years, and even then it has so many major scientific problems. The evolution story is also based on unchristian assumptions such as no Creator God and no global flood.

-MSB

## New Editor

This is my first issue as editor. Following in the footsteps of Warren Krug will be a challenge. Warren is the only editor the LSI Journal has known, serving faithfully for 29 years. When Warren began the Journal in 1987 LSI was only 13 years old (LSI was incorporated on January 7, 1974). The first LSI Journal was the Sep-Oct 1987 issue (left). The first laser printed Journal was Jan-Feb 1992 (center). The first color cover was Sep-Oct 2004 (right).



Many changes and improvements have occurred during Warren's tenure. Starting in 2007 (or somewhat before) the Journal became available electronically (pdf) in addition to the printed form. Today most of our LSI membership (170 of 198; 86%) choose to receive the electronic version. The print version is still received by all WELS high schools and colleges. Another improvement instituted in 2010 was to have all Journal articles be reviewed by a three person Editorial Committee.

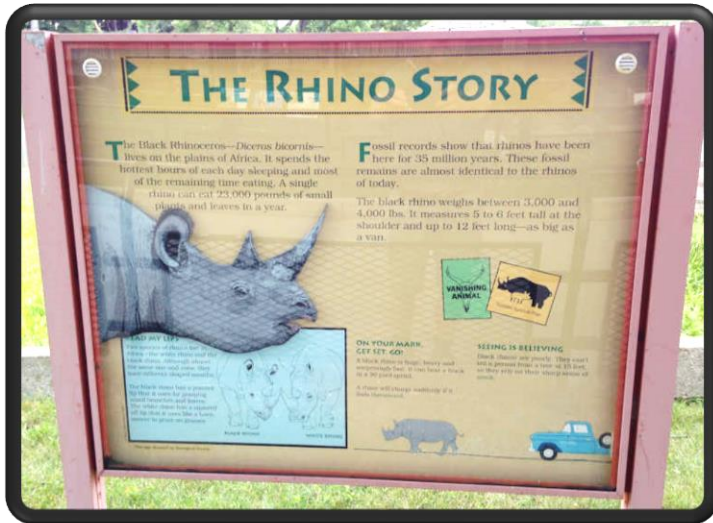
It is my intent to follow Warren's lead by continuing to improve the LSI Journal. One priority is finding additional Journal authors, especially from the ranks of WELS teachers. Author Guidelines are available at [www.LutheranScience.org/author](http://www.LutheranScience.org/author)

-MSB

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*Evolutionists Say Amazing Things*

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*image credit:2015 by Mark Bergemann*

## Zoo Rhino Sign

This photo was taken last summer at the Milwaukee County Zoo. The sign reads: “Fossil records show that rhinos have been here for 35 million years. These fossil remains are almost identical to the rhinos of today.”

Did you know that an evolutionist would say this same thing about most animals and plants? The evolutionist would simply change the number of years (he would claim some animals lived hundreds of millions of years ago). Having fossils be “almost identical” to the animals and plants living today would be expected if the Biblical account of Creation and the Noachic Flood are true. The world around us is very much as expected based on what God reveals in Scripture.

-MSB