



# The Christian Responsibility to Muslims

## *A Ronning Centre Lecture Series*

by David J. Goa

### Lecture 1

#### Turning Persons into Symbols

We begin our thinking together by examining the landscape of images that incite fear and anger, divide people, and turn whole communities into symbols. Mischief masquerades as freedom of speech; virulent secularists join preachers of religious hatred in fuelling violence. How ought we to respond to those who imagine themselves as zealous for the truth? What relationships temper propaganda, bridge divisions, and restore civil life and the capacity of religious communities to free themselves from the merchants of hatred?

Monday, 21 November, 7:00 p.m.

Messiah Lutheran Church  
4810 - 50 Street, Camrose

Tuesday, 22 November, 7:00 p.m.

Advent Lutheran Church  
11 Scenic Acres Gate, Calgary

Thursday, 24 November, 7:00 p.m.

Trinity Lutheran Church  
10014 - 81 Avenue, Edmonton

### Lecture 2

#### Landscape of Christian – Muslim Conversation

In our second consideration I invite you to think and discuss the various pathways we need to walk in order to resist the colonization of faith by those who would use it to deal death, explore how to enter into spiritual friendship with those who long for such friendship, consider our stance in the face of those in the grip of fear and violence, and map the trajectory of conversations, political and theological.

Monday, 28 November, 7:00 p.m.

Messiah Lutheran Church  
4810 - 50 Street, Camrose

Tuesday, 29 November, 7:00 p.m.

Advent Lutheran Church  
11 Scenic Acres Gate, Calgary

Thursday, 1 December, 7:00 p.m.

Trinity Lutheran Church  
10014 - 81 Avenue, Edmonton

### Lecture 3

#### Conversations Ancient and Modern

Eastern Christianity and Islam share one landscape and have lived side by side since the seventh century and continue to do so today. The conversation between them in a shared landscape has been very different from the rhetoric of Western Christianity and Europe, shaped, in large part, by the crusades. What may we learn from the conversations Muhammad (ca.570-632) had with Christians; St John of Damascus (c.655-c.750), a key figure in the court of the Caliph, had with Muslims; St Gregory Palamas had with various Muslim theologians; and the Caliph had following the conquest of Constantinople in 1453? May we learn anything from these conversations that can help us in the twenty-first century?

Dates to be set for Winter Term

### Lecture 4

#### Thinking About the Prophet Muhammad

Muslims treasure the memory of the Prophet Muhammad as they do that of all the prophets. In my conversations with Muslims over the last several years I realize many of them have been deeply troubled by the images of Muhammad as well as the image of Jesus Christ that circulate in the modern West. They also ask why it is Christians have such awful images of Muhammad when they have such revered images of Jesus Christ. In our reflection together I will offer a new way for Christians to think about Muhammad, a way that is deeply Christian and free of the tragic historical legacy of such images.

Dates to be set for Winter term

*David J. Goa is director of the Ronning Centre for the Study of Religion & Public Life.*



Chester Ronning Centre  
for the Study of Religion and Public Life

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