

# Christian Action Ministry

## Newsletter

Involving the Christian in Community Action

Sept.—Oct. 2023★ Vol. 33, Number 05

## Calendar

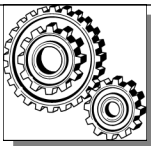
Restoring Our Faith  
Summit  
Oct. 10th

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or  
contact our website  
(see back page)



**In the  
Works**

### Reasonable Service

Are you interested in becoming involved? CAM is looking for interested and active people to act as liaisons to their church, helping to keep the Christian community informed. Contact us at [camnetVT@gmail.com](mailto:camnetVT@gmail.com).

## Faith and Science

By  
Lauston Stephens

Christian schools and Christians who home-school may choose different textbooks than public schools, but they still teach science. There have been many scientists who were people of faith and there still are. Johannes Kepler considered becoming a Lutheran clergyman before settling on science.

Some think that science opposes faith. They attempt to use science to show faith as folly and their presumed superiority to people of faith. Bishop James Ussher's calculation of the age of the earth is a favorite target. When people ridicule Ussher, they leave out things.

They don't say how they would have solved the problem in Ussher's day, 1581-1656. They never offer another approach that was available four centuries ago.

Second, the clergy were often the most learned and well-informed people of their day. Ussher used a telescope to confirm the findings of Galileo, Copernicus, and Kepler. He was a man of the science of his day. He wasn't a "rube;" he was a scholar. A collection of his writings is over 500 pages long. Which of his critics can match that?

Third, you can't do the age-of-the-earth calculation just from the bible. Records from many cultures and languages must be consulted to use this approach. Skeptics don't challenge the other records, only the bible, and the method.

Along the same lines, Ussher's results were not too far off from the Jewish calendar. His critics don't normally take issue with that. (*Anno Mundi 5784* begins at sundown on September 15<sup>th</sup>.)

Finally, other scholars of that era, including Johannes Kepler and Isaac Newton, made similar calculations with similar results. Why aren't they mocked? Because they are remembered only as scientists, not as men of faith.

Does this history seem unrelated to our times? Kepler served as the royal mathematician of the Hapsburg empire. There was a small group of religious zealots who were claiming that the end of the age was upon us. These claims were disturbing the peace of the empire. Kepler did his research and calculations to disprove the claims. On behalf of the government, he used the scholarship of his day to refute "fake news" that was being spread by religious

people. Who would you have heeded?

If we could bring Kepler, Ussher, and Newton into our day, we can be sure that they all would seek to understand modern science. Skeptics have no case against them. Their problem is really with 21<sup>st</sup>-century people who seem to limit themselves to 17<sup>th</sup>-century data.

All that being said, modern science does have problems. Galileo was able to build a telescope in his own home. It helped to revolutionize mankind's understanding of the universe. Those days are long gone.

Today, to advance the borders of human knowledge, great fortunes are often needed. The people who hold the purse strings may have an agenda other than pure science. Governments will want to weaponize knowledge. Politicians will want to politicize it. Entrepreneurs will want to monetize it. To obtain funding, scientists can be tempted to falsify results.

Scientists also live in a "publish or perish" world. Universities may have the tools or funding needed for research, but do university administrators have the wisdom and scientific expertise

to decide who to give access to the tools and funding? The reputation of the university is at stake. Do you fund an unpublished genius with unusual ideas or a well-published journeyman scientist? Are the societal or political winds blowing in favor of one direction of research that will have marginal value rather than something that can be widely beneficial?

Magic and science have something in common.

Illusionists never reveal how they do their illusions except to other “magicians.” The explanations that many modern scientists would offer for their conclusions may only be fully understood by other scientists with years of specialized training. We can go through life, never knowing how someone is sawn in half and never understanding the science behind half of the features on our smartphones.

Okay, you can find both on

YouTube, but magicians and scientists both have access to knowledge that is not generally familiar to everyone.

The problems that face science affect the rest of us. People are putting their trust, their faith, in an idealized notion labeled “science.” As with all human endeavors, even when it is well done, science is imperfect and has limits. We should be cautious in embracing what may be heralded as scientific find-

ings. But we should not abandon the pursuit of understanding.

We are encouraging readers to attend the Restoring Our Faith Summit on October 10<sup>th</sup>. Scientists will be among the featured speakers. Let’s hear what they have to say.

*Lauston Stephens is a Director of the Christian Action Ministry and attends Roadside Chapel in Rutland.*

## Speaker Credentials For Restoring Our Faith Summit

*in alphabetical order and as space permits*

**Mary Eberstadt** holds the Panula Chair in Christian Culture at the Catholic Information Center in Washington DC and is Senior Research Fellow at the Faith & Reason Institute.

A sociologist and psychologist, **Pat Fagan**, Ph.D. is President of the Marriage and Religion Research Institute (MARRI) an organization dedicated to delivering robust social science data on the impact of marriage and religious practice on the lives of adults and children, and on the future of the nation.

**Mary Rice Hasson**, J.D., is the Kate O’Beirne Fellow at the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C., where she co-founded the Person and Identity Project, an initiative that equips parents and faith-based institutions with resources to counter gender ideology and promote the truth about the human person.

**Rabbi Dr. Ari Lamm** is the Chief Executive of Bnai Zion, a nonprofit producing media and entertainment to spread great Jewish ideas and secure the State of Israel. Rabbi Lamm is the host of the top-ranked weekly podcast on the Bible and society, Good Faith Effort.

**Liel Leibovitz** is the Editor-at-Large of Tablet Magazine and a co-host of its podcast, Unorthodox.

**Francis X. Maier** is a senior fellow in Catholic Studies at the Ethics and Public Policy Center.

**Rabbi Dr. Meir Y. Soloveichik** is one of the world’s preeminent Jewish thinkers and educators, and he’s one of America’s most influential religious leaders. He is the senior rabbi of Congregation Shearith Israel in Manhattan, the oldest Jewish congregation in the United States. He is also director of the Zahava and Moshael Straus Center for Torah and Western Thought at Yeshiva University.

**Delano Squires** is a Research Fellow in the Richard and Helen DeVos Center for Life, Religion, and Family at The Heritage Foundation. Delano's articles and essays have been published by *Newsweek*, *The American Conservative*, *The Federalist*, *The Institute for Family Studies*, *Black and Married with Kids*, *The Root*, and *The Grio*.



**“I give you thanks, Creator and God, that you have given me this joy in thy creation, and I rejoice in the works of your hands. See I have now completed the work to which I was called. In it I have used all the talents you have lent to my spirit.” — Johannes Kepler**

# Artificial Intelligence

by  
Kay Trudell

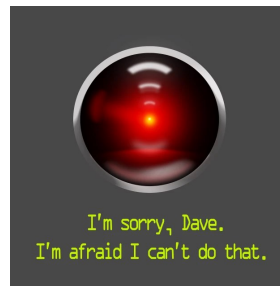
Have you ever received an unsolicited phone call from a charity, political organization, etc. extolling their works or positions on issues of the day, and then asking for a donation? Even conservative organizations. As you attempt to ask questions of the caller, they simply continue with their script. Suddenly, you realize you are not talking to a "real person" at all --- but to an artificial intelligence (AI) call robot. You have been solicited by artificial intelligence. I don't know about you, but I always end up feeling let down and betrayed in that situation. I feel that if the charity or other organization does not care enough to have a real person take the time to call me and talk with me --- including answering possible questions I may have --- all they are interested in is money. So far, I do not recall having received any such calls from Christian organizations, but that may happen in the future as well. It is certainly possible. Call me old-fashioned, but this is a trend I do not care for.

I personally relate this futuristic development to the Book of Revelation and trends it warns Christians to beware of. Many of us saw the "Terminator" science fiction movie series back in the day, and remember Skynet, the artificial intelligence computer system that originally was invented for a benign purpose, but ended up ruling humans. Could this trend ever lead to that

development? Possibly. We simply do not know. Right now, AI makes phone calls, predicts economic trends, writes books, composes music, and assists in medical procedures, among other things. From what I have read, AI systems are now also capable of learning and teaching themselves, and evolving as they go. I'm sorry, but that reminds me too much of the Skynet system in the "Terminator" movies. Humans ended up enslaved by computers and an AI system that ruled them.

There are prophecies in Revelation whose fulfillment humans did not think was possible. Suddenly, Christians can begin to see the connection between AI and biblical prophecy. We are only at the beginning of this AI cultural evolution. It would be naive to think what we see now is only how far this development will go. As Christians have seen recently, science has become amoral through its practitioners, no matter how technically advanced it purports to be (abortions, transitioning people from one sex to the other, etc.). Science has also become political. Witness the one-sided debate secular humanists and globalists are pushing about the causes of changing weather. You must refer to it as "global warming" and agree that it is caused by humans. God is nowhere in the picture. Dissenting views by other scientists and weather experts are censored. Several thousand scientists, many connected

with NASA, signed a dissenting document some years ago, disagreeing with the "experts" that weather change was being caused by humans. They were ridiculed and the document was quashed. I recall reading about it in conservative news sources, but I rarely hear about dissenting weather experts today. Only one line of thought is allowed.



What is artificial intelligence, anyway? An economic newsletter I read recently (the June 2023 issue of BottomLine Personal) defines AI as "software and machines that think with human-like intelligence. In the past, computer algorithms followed a series of instructions to complete a task . . . AI analyzes patterns and makes predictions and decisions. It continuously improves with more data. You have been using AI for years in your home and office." The article then goes on to list some ways we use AI today without even thinking twice about it: cell phones, Netflix, banks, credit cards, AI digital assistants such as Siri, etc.

An area pastor reported recently that AI is now being

proposed to be used to translate the Bible into remote languages where people have never had bibles before. A Christian newsletter I read recently said that AI is being promoted for Bible translation because it can do in a few months what used to take Bible translators ten years to do. So what's the problem? AI is not a human Christian or a faithful Jew with a faith brain or divine soul. As it translates, there is a VERY real danger that the truth and essence of the Bible could be changed. Human brains, especially in matters pertaining to religious faith, are subtle in ways AI is not. If a translation of a holy book is removed from humans, and no one has translated that particular language before, how can we know what it is writing? How can we catch mistakes in doctrine if we ourselves cannot read that language? And that is the danger Christians are concerned about.

More and more, we are seeing signs of the fulfillment of last days Bible prophecy. There are certainly beneficial uses of AI. The danger is that, as with Skynet in science fiction movies, fiction can become fact. Christians need to be wise and discerning in their interactions with AI. Ask the Holy Spirit to bestow upon us wisdom, wide-open eyes and ears, and the ability to discern truth.

*Kay Trudell is a Director of the Christian Action Ministry and attends Ignite Church in Williston.*

## Restoring Our Faith Summit Returns to Vermont

“The Restoring Our Faith Summit returns to South Burlington in 2023! Join world class speakers, renowned social scientists, faith leaders, and scholars including [Rabbi Dr. Ari Lamm,] Rabbi Dr. Meir Soloveichik, Delano Squires, Mary Hasson, J.D., and Dr. Pat Fagan, and more at the one-day summit on October 10th in South Burlington.

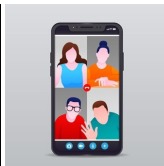
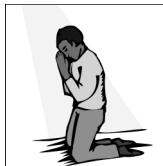
This year’s Summit will feature discussions on troubling cultural trends and the critical role of faith, marriage and the importance of protecting children in a flourishing society. Speakers will address the breakdown of the family, fatherlessness in the home, the sexualization of children and the troubling influences on them.

Early bird tickets are available for \$50 until September 10th, at which point the price will increase to \$75. **Breakfast and buffet lunch will be served and are included in your ticket fee.** Reserve your spot early as tickets will sell out quickly!”

Find more information and register through: <https://restoringourfaithvermont.com/>

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### What Can I Do?



*Faith without works is dead  
James 2:17*

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or website  
<https://christianactionministry.org/>

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### Next Meeting

Sept. 12, 7:00 pm  
Zoom

Oct. 9, 7:00 P.M.  
Parkinson home  
Hinesburg, Vt.

[camnetvt@gmail.com](mailto:camnetvt@gmail.com)  
Email to confirm date and location

**Make A Difference**