

YALE DIVINITY SCHOOL News Release

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Duke Reformation Scholar to Deliver Bainton Lecture on September 26

New Haven, CT—David C. Steinmetz, the Amos Ragan Kearns Professor of the History of Christianity at Duke Divinity School, will deliver the 2006 Bainton Lecture at Yale Divinity School Sept. 26 on the topic “The Domestication of Prophecy in the Early Reformation.”

Steinmetz will describe how “fateful consequences” for both Protestants and Catholics grew out of a shift in worship practices during the Early Reformation, when Protestant reformers began to emphasize preaching over against the sacramental practices central to Catholic worship.

In a précis of his lecture, Steinmetz wrote, “Indeed, viewed from one angle, the Protestant Reformation could be described as a prophetic movement in the late medieval Catholic Church. It transformed what had been a sacramental fellowship in which preaching had been regarded as beneficial but not essential into a worshipping assembly in which the public preaching of the Word became the central defining act.”

Steinmetz is a specialist in the history of Christianity in the later Middle Ages and Reformation. In recent years he has concentrated on the history of biblical scholarship and learning in Europe from 1350 to 1600. Before arriving at Duke in 1971, he taught at Lancaster Theological Seminary of the United Church of Christ. He has been a visiting professor at Harvard University and at the University of Notre Dame as well as a Guggenheim Fellow at Cambridge University and a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow at the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel, Germany.

He serves as general editor of the series, *Oxford Studies in Historical Theology* and is a member of numerous editorial boards. He is co-editor of *The Cambridge Companion to Reformation Theology* (2004) and author of a number of books on the Reformation including, most recently, *Reformers in the Wings: From Geiler von Kaysersberg to Theodore Beza* (2000).

He is a United Methodist minister in the North Carolina Annual Conference and a former president of the American Society of Church History.

The Roland Bainton Lectureship was inaugurated in 1988, honoring the two foci of Professor Bainton’s life and work: church history and the church’s witness to peace and justice. Bainton arrived at Yale as a student in 1914, was appointed to the faculty in 1921 and remained a member of the community until his death in 1984. He officially retired from Yale Divinity School in 1962 as the Titus Street Professor of Ecclesiastical History.

The lecture, free and open to the public, is scheduled to begin at 5:15 p.m. in Niebuhr Lecture Hall, followed by a reception in the Sarah Smith Gallery. Yale Divinity School is located at 409 Prospect St., New Haven.

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