

Chemotherapy ~ Ice Cream ~ Homelessness ~ A Kiss ~ Separation ~

Depression ~ Technology ~ Debt

Funerals ~ Imagination ~



*Beauty*

*Confronting the Curse*

*Awaiting Redemption*

*&*

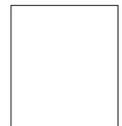
*Brokenness*

Iowa L'Abri Conference  
September 11 & 12, 2009  
Iowa 4-H Center, Madrid, Iowa



Friendship ~ Hate ~ Butterflies ~ Stress ~ a Mountain ~ Selfishness ~

Iowa L'Abri Conference  
Little Field Abbey  
776 Hwy 110  
Storm Lake, IA 50588



# Beauty & Brokenness

*Confronting the Curse, Awaiting Redemption*

September 11-12  
Madrid, IA

## Iowa L'Abri Conference

Some see beauty while others see nothing but brokenness and a sense that we are trapped on a landfill planet of doom and despair. Sometimes it seems that our Western culture maintains an atmosphere of hyper-marketing which over-accentuates the beautiful and disdains the less-than-perfect. Please join us at the sixth Iowa L'Abri Conference as we grapple with these issues and seek a balanced view of the beauty of the original creation and an honest look at life in the fallen and cursed world. We look forward in hope to the restored Heaven and Earth as co-laborers in God's work of reclaiming and restoring His creation "far as the curse is found."

James & Heidi Roland

Alan & Laurie Jensen

Peter & Dawn Merz



### Dr. Francis Schaeffer

and his wife, Edith founded the first L'Abri community in Switzerland some fifty years ago (*l'abri* is a French word meaning "the shelter"). Dr. Schaeffer was a Christian theologian and philosopher who also authored a number of books on theology, philosophy, general culture and the arts.

The L'Abri communities worldwide are study centers where individuals can seek answers to honest questions about God and the significance of human life. L'Abri believes that Christianity speaks to all aspects of life.

In the spirit of L'Abri, our conference is an opportunity through lectures, discussions, and personal interaction, to feed and hone the mind in an effort to deepen one's understanding of what it means to be a Christian in our time and culture.

Visit [www.labri.org](http://www.labri.org) to learn more about L'Abri Fellowship.

"With the Fall, all became abnormal. It is not just that the individual is separated from God by his true moral guilt, but each of us is not what God made us to be. ... human relationships are not what God meant them to be. ... nature is abnormal – the whole cause-and-effect significant history is now abnormal. To say it another way: *there is much in history now which should not be.*  
~ Francis Schaeffer



"Today most men in America are not physically starving. In fact, most Americans are suffocating in the stench of a completely affluent society. But no matter what their philosophic and intellectual system is, men, being made in the image of God, have human hungers that need to be satisfied. ... some people have a deep longing for beauty. So they try to produce beauty out of their own fallenness and self-expression of fallenness. But the final answer and true comfort are not there. ... And many men are hungry for love, for God has made man to love. So our generation has turned to sex as a fulfillment of the need for love in the human heart. But it doesn't work; sex, separated from humanness, is not love. So man cries out, "I am starving." (Francis A. Schaeffer, *Death In The City*, Ch. 1)

# BEAUTY & BROKENNESS: A L'ABRI CONFERENCE

Friday, September 11



- 6:00-7:00 pm Registration (in Birch Lodge)
- 7:00-8:30 General Session ***A World Full of Beauty***, Larry Snyder
- 8:30 Pie Social and Campfire with live music

Saturday, September 12

- 7:30-8:00 Breakfast (for those with accommodations at the 4-H Center)
- 8:00-8:45 Registration (in Birch Lodge)
- 8:45-9:00 Opening Remarks
- 9:00-10:15 General Session ***Glorious Ruins in a Broken World***, Jock McGregor
- 10:15-10:30 Morning Tea
- 10:30-11:45 Workshops (see insert for detailed descriptions)



1. *A Time for Roots: The New Quest for History, Liturgy, and Authenticity* by Merz & Roland
2. *Living with Depression, It's not all Bad...Really* by Alan Jensen
3. *From Bad to Worse. What happens when God doesn't exactly deliver?* by Mark Ryan
4. *I'm Not A Barbie Girl in a Barbie World* by Buffy Barrs
5. *Hey, My Parents Were Kids Too: - A two-way conversation for children* by Nancy Snyder

- 12:00-1:00 Lunch
- 1:00-2:00 Free Time: Hike the trails, swim, fish, play ball, nap
- 2:00-3:15 Workshops (see insert for detailed descriptions)



1. *Raising Wild Things in Creation* by Alan Jensen
2. *Glorious Ruins: A Christian View of History* by Ian Barrs
3. *The "As Is" Ministry: Ministering Beauty Through Brokenness* by Laurie Jensen
4. *The Life of the Outsider: Living in The Mess of Beauty* by Linda Anderson

- 3:15-3:30 Afternoon Tea
- 3:30-4:45 General Session ***Redemption- Watching for the Creator King***, Mark Ryan
- 4:45-5:00 Closing Remarks by Larry Snyder
- 5:00-6:30 High Tea and classical guitar concert



Audio tapes of the sessions will not be provided, but you may bring your own audio recorder and request permission to record from individual speakers.

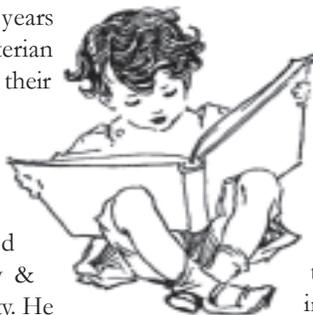
“You come of the Lord Adam and the Lady Eve. And that is both honour enough to erect the head of the poorest beggar, and shame enough to bow the shoulders of the greatest emperor in earth.” ~ Aslan in *Prince Caspian*

**Linda Anderson** is a retired writing and literature teacher; she served in the English Dept. at Iowa State University for 25 years, and taught a total of 32 years on the college and high school levels. She has been a single foster parent, an adoptive mother, and a wife and widow. She describes herself as a yearner, a seeker, and a pursuer of joy. Besides Biblical truth, her sources of inspiration include her daughter, close friends, nature, Bob Dylan, Wendell Berry, film, nieces and nephews, interior design, and hiking to waterfalls. Her formative influences include the “LLLJJ group,” of which she has been a part, Francis Schaeffer and C.S. Lewis.

**Ian & Buffy Barrs** Ian was born and raised in the south of England, where he frequently enjoyed lectures and discussions at the English L’Abri. His wide-ranging interests include reading and discussing History, Politics, Culture, Literature and imagination. Ian has a BA in History and a Graduate Certificate in Historical Studies from the University of Wales Lampeter, specialising in Medieval European History and Historical Theory. He worked for 4 years at Butser Ancient Farm, an open-air museum of Iron Age and Roman Britain. He is particularly interested in gaining a historical perspective on present-day events and issues.

Buffy is involved with the Atlantic E-Free Worship Committee and a member of the Atlantic Art Guild. She also co-leads a Grief Support group and has a heart for those who have lost close friends or family. Buffy has been a helper at the Rochester, Southborough, and English branches of L’Abri. She also worked for two years as Church Intern at the International Presbyterian Church, Liss, England. Ian and Buffy live with their little girl Fiona in Atlantic, Iowa.

**Alan Jensen** is Director of the Earthen Institute ([www.eartheninstitute.org](http://www.eartheninstitute.org)). He earned his B.S. in Early Childhood Development & Masters of Community & Regional Planning from Iowa State University. He is a lecturer in the Community and Regional Planning Department (8 years) and in the Public Administration Graduate program at ISU. For the past 13 years has been a Community and Economic Development Specialist for ISU Extension where he assists local communities on planning and development interests. Alan and his wife, Laurie, travel to South Asia regularly for community development and education projects. They live in Ames, Iowa; they have three wild sons, Phillip, Andrew & Stefan; and have three wildly mentored grandchildren.



**Laurie Jensen** is a part time PE teacher and former coach. She and her husband Alan open their home (near the ISU campus) to a diversity of individuals with the qualification that what they offer is “as is”. Laurie spends her summers working in a lodge near Lake Superior in northern Minnesota living in a simple place that Alan built for her. She especially delights in being a grandma of three honey-blond toddlers.

**Jock & Alison McGregor** are staff members of Rochester L’Abri. They met at Swiss L’Abri in the early 80’s. They have also worked for ten years with L’Abri in England, where they opened their home to countless L’Abri students. Jock has a B.Sc. undergraduate degree and a M.Div. from Regent College in Vancouver. Jock has been actively involved in a ministry to medical students at Mayo Clinic and has lectured widely on many topics that bear on the relationship between Christianity and contemporary culture. Alison worked in computing for 3M Australia, before joining Jock in the ministry of L’Abri.

**Peter & Dawn Merz** Dawn grew up on an Iowa farm and was reading Schaeffer, Lewis, and Laura Ingalls Wilder from a very young age (though not necessarily in that order). After a sharp learning curve with Larry and Nancy Snyder in Rochester, she was a worker at the English L’Abri for seven years, which is where she met and married Peter Merz, who also grew up reading Schaeffer, Lewis and Wilder.

Peter is passionate about history, literature, languages, people, the outdoors, the arts, and sports. He completed a degree in Classics, Latin and Greek, in 2007. Since early 2006 they have lived in New South Wales, Australia, where their little girl Johannah was born. They have spent the last year working on the Dahl Family Century farm and are now short term workers at the Rochester L’Abri before they return to Australia at Christmas time.

**James Roland** is pastor of Hope Evangelical Free Church in Storm Lake, Iowa, where he lives on a small farm (Little Field Abbey) with his wife, Heidi and their children Sophia, Maria, Peter and William. For the past three years they have worked on a rural mission in Nyahururu, Kenya, East Africa. He has studied at L’Abri; the Centre for Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies, Oxford; and holds a B.A. in History and Bible and an M.A. in Christian thought from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. James and Heidi host arts and ideas discussions in their home through the ministry of Cafe Zanzibar. His hobbies include reading with his family, sailing, exploring the outdoors, medieval architecture and landscaping.

**Mark Ryan** serves Crossroads Presbyterian Fellowship in Saint Louis, MO, as an associate pastor. He also serves as visiting instructor in apologetics at Covenant Theological Seminary. Prior to his return to the pastorate, Mark, together with his wife Terri, served for many years with L’Abri Fellowship in the USA (Southborough, MA) and in Canada (Bowen Island, BC). Mark and Terri have three young children, two zebra finches, and one lovebird which, thanks to our son, now lives in the neighbor’s tree.

**Larry & Nancy Snyder** have been with Rochester L’Abri since 1988, having previously worked for 17 years with L’Abri in Switzerland. Larry has an undergraduate degree in history and a graduate degree in theology from Covenant Seminary in St Louis. Nancy has a nursing degree and also speaks on behalf of the Dutch organization ‘Help a Child’ that supports thousands of children in India and Africa. For the past 15 years they have hosted L’Abri conferences in Rochester on education, the arts and sciences, theology and literature.