**Dr. Rev. Derek R. Nelson**

Derek Nelson is a theologian and historian of Christianity. He teaches courses in both of those fields, as well as religion and culture (such as literature and film), social ethics, and whatever else students are interested in studying with him. In recent semesters independent studies with students have included “Faith, Food, and Sustainability Ethics,” “Christianity and Natural Science,” and “The Christology of Karl Barth.” He and Professor Hartnett of the Classics department recently taught a course on Christianity in Ancient Rome, which included an immersion trip to Rome. Over the last three years, six students have interned with Nelson in the Religion department, and he invites more in the future.

Nelson is the author or editor of ten books, including [*The Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Martin Luther*](http://religion.oxfordre.com/), on which he is working with a team of international experts. This resource sets a new standard in Luther research, and will be published to coincide with the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation in 2017. His intellectual biography of Martin Luther, co-written with his deceased mentor Timothy F. Lull, is [*Resilient Reformer: The Life and Thought of Martin Luther*](http://www.amazon.com/Resilient-Reformer-Thought-Martin-Luther/dp/1451494157/). He has written about 50 articles, essays in books and reviews. He served on the task force that produced a social statement for the ELCA (in which he is an ordained pastor) called [*The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries*](http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Criminal-Justice).

After graduating *summa cum laude* from Wabash College in 1999, Nelson earned the M.Div. at Yale Divinity School and the Ph.D. in systematic and philosophical theology at the Graduate Theological Union and the University of California in Berkeley. He taught at Thiel College in Greenville, Pennsylvania for six happy years. He was visiting professor at Oxford University in 2013, and will be on sabbatical at Cambridge University in 2016.

An avid traveler, Nelson has led groups of students and clergy to Italy, Germany, Mexico, and South Africa, among other international destinations. His study-abroad experience in Karlstad, Sweden was so formative that he has become a strong advocate for students to gain cross-cultural experience. Nelson also directs the [Wabash Pastoral Leadership Program](https://www.wabash.edu/pastoral_leadership/), which serves an ecumenical group of Indiana pastors who are developing as civic leaders. This is funded by the Lilly Endowment and hosted by Wabash College.

Attentive to his surroundings, he lives in the Sugar Creek watershed, Agricultural zone 5b for plant hardiness and sunlight, and the Indiana-Kentucky synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. He brews beer and makes furniture, though never at the same time.

Derek was raised on a beef cattle farm in Vasa, Minnesota. He lives in the woods near Crawfordsville and is married to the [Rev. Kelly Nelson](http://christchurchindiana.net/ChristLutheran/Home.html). They are the proud parents of toddler Madeleine.