

# The Sword & Shield

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A Publication of Bellator Christi Ministries

## The need for pastoral apologetics

By: Brian G. Chilton, M.Div., Ph.D., President & Founder of Bellator Christi Ministries



It is no surprise that Bellator Christi is a ministry wholly devoted to apologetics. From our podcasts, articles, and forthcoming books, the intellectual life is emphasized. Emotions are important, but they can lead us

astray when left unchecked. Karen Swallow Prior warns that sentimentalism can become dangerous when “emotions are evoked apart from or subordinate to other aspects of the human experience (such as intellectual, spiritual, or physical experience) and the totality of what is real (Prior, 128).

Yet emotions and experiences are critical to the total life of the believer as well. Emotions without reason lead to mindless sentimentalism, whereas reason without emotion leads to Stoicism. Pastoral apologetics tends to both the emotional and intellectual life of the believer.

The power of pastoral apologetics is especially seen in the realm of hospice ministry. When people face the most tragic of circumstances, they cannot rely on their emotions alone, especially seeing that their emotions are on a wild roller coaster of a ride. Apologetics can help a person find the anchor they need amid the storms of life. Yet, on the other hand, sympathy and empathy are needed to offer effective counsel to a person in need. Place the two together and you have pastoral apologetics. This style offers a one-two punch that other methods cannot afford. The mind and heart are two parts that constitute the whole of humanity. Let’s not either one in our attempts to minister to others in need. Pastoral apologetics can serve as a safeguard for the believer in all manners of doubt that may come (Gentry, *Pulpit Apologetics*, 14–16) and offers a more robust method of ministry.

Sources:

Thomas J. Gentry. *Pulpit Apologist*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2020.

Karen Swallow Prior. *The Evangelical Imagination: How Stories, Images & Metaphors Created a Culture in Crisis*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2023.



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### Special points of interest

- Dr. Sherene Khouri's new publication with IVP Academic.
- Thanks to Jerry and Dr. Kathy Bogacz on their generous donation to the ministry.
- Release of the Bellator Christi Podcast's Season 8 schedule.
- Top Articles of 2023.

## From the Executive VP's Desk

### Titles and subtitles

By: Michelle Johnson, M.Div., Ph.D., Executive Vice President and Managing Editor



I love physical books! They are my favorite for several reasons— the feel of each page of paper between my fingers as I turn from one to the next and the ability to highlight and make notes that don't disappear to cyberland. While those are my preferences, a great deal of my reading now takes place online and a majority

of that reading consists of articles, not unlike those on BellatorChristi.com. In addition to our topic and the contents of our articles, we must also consider the readability of our material when it is in electronic form.

There are a few things we can consider that will make our articles easier to read electronically. In a previous newsletter, we considered the importance of the length of sentences, paragraphs, and the overall article. Here I would like to encourage you to consider the title and section subtitles. The title of the article is a quick glimpse into its content. Think about your own scrolling experience. How quickly do you decide to stop and read an article or keep moving to the next one? Does the title grab your attention? Does the article introduce a keyword to the article's subject? When writing your article, craft a title that gets to the point and will make your reader stop.

The section titles should also include a keyword that ties to the article as a whole and points to the section specifically. Once the reader is engaged, section titles also provide a kind of road map. Think about your own online reading experience. If it's like mine, it is often small increments of time, frequently interrupted—often due to the fact I'm using my phone and standing in line or filling a small fragment of time. Section titles help me re-engage when I return to the article, and it reminds me where I was and where I'm going. When writing your article, include section titles that will help your online reader stay connected and get to the message you intended to convey.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*

# The Pastor Apologist

## Do, ask, pray

By: T. J. Gentry, D.Min., Ph.D., Associate Vice President of Publications & Communications

“Ask and it will be given to you” (Matt. 7:7, NKJV).



I have three requests of you, friends. I would like some of you to *do* something, some of you to *ask for* something, and all of you to *pray for* something. What are the somethings? I'll give you a hint: they all have to do with the title of my column. As you just saw in looking to the top of this article, my column is entitled, “Pastor Apologist.” So, in keeping with my column's focus, here are the somethings I have in mind.

If you're a pastor, I'm asking you to make it a priority to include apologetics in your preaching. Before you say, “I can't,” I ask you, “Why not?” Apologetics is at the heart of all you say in the pulpit, even if you don't realize it. When you preach for holiness, you give reasons for holiness. When you preach for unity, you give reasons for unity. When you preach for conversion, you give reasons for conversion. All those reasons you give are proof of the apologetic content that infuses your ministry. If you're with me thus far, then you'll see that I'm not asking for something new or unattainable. I'm asking you to remember that we have a reasonable faith—one that speaks to the heart and mind—and we have good reasons for that faith. Your people need to hear those reasons at every turn of the homiletical wheel, be it turning for discipleship or evangelism. Pastor, I'm asking you to do the work of the pulpit apologist God calls you to be.

If you're not a pastor, then I assume you have one, and here's my ask of you: I'm asking you to go to your pastor and ask him to make apologetics a priority in his preaching. Though I'm not intending that the congregation seeks to dictate what is said in the pulpit, I do know that my ears are attentive to the concerns of those I pastor. Your pastor's ears are also listening to your concerns. Don't be afraid to voice them. Be tactful, respectful, and genuine, but make sure you ask your pastor to proclaim the *what* and the *why* of the full counsel of God. Faithful church member, I'm asking you to ask your pastor to be the apologist God calls him to be.

I'm asking all of you—pastors and those under their care—to pray that God will raise up churches with apologetics at the heart of their mission to seekers and saints. All of us can pray, and all of us should pray specifically. We have a dire need for strong churches that can clearly, lovingly, and passionately proclaim and defend the precious deposit of the gospel. God is listening, and I believe He will respond to the prayers of His people when they call on Him to raise up strong, gospel-centered, apologetically sound churches. I'm asking all of us to raise our voices to heaven with fervent prayers to strengthen existing churches and spark new ones with a heart for apologetics.

Will you do, ask, and pray?

## Doctrines and Devotions

### Advancing gospel conversations

By: Deanna Huff, Th.M., Ph.D., Associate Vice President of Spiritual Care and Outreach



Would you like to advance gospel conversations? Do you feel hindered by feeling ill-equipped? *Listening* and *questioning* are two helpful skills in any conversation. It has been said, “Being heard is so close to being loved that for the average person, they are almost indistinguishable.” In addition, asking questions stimulates the brain and cultivates better thinking. By following the example of Jesus, these strategies can further gospel conversations.

These two skills are a pattern of Jesus. In Luke, the reader sees Jesus as a youth in the temple, “sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions” (Luke 2:46). The first observation is that Jesus was listening to the conversation to understand their thinking. He then responded with good questions. These questions stimulated a dialogue that revealed truths. Luke notes in the next verse that “All who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers” (Luke 2:47). Listening can enable the ability to understand issues and respond with good questions that can lead to revealing truths or exposing errors.

Listening and questioning are helpful skills to advance the gospel. Listening demonstrates value to individuals and helps the hearer understand the person’s beliefs. Asking questions helps the listener self-reflect on their beliefs. Questioners should consider allowing time for the hearer to answer, even up to eight seconds. Listening and questioning can cultivate the conversation to show love, reveal truth, and expose errors to advance the gospel.

## Bellator Christi News and Updates

- A ***HUGE thanks*** goes to Jerry and Dr. Kathy Bogacz for their generous contribution to Bellator Christi Ministries! Their donation ensured that the ministry could continue on its current platform for the next three years. If you would like to donate to the ministry, contact Dr. Brian Chilton for more information.
- *Why Creationism Still Matters* is nearly complete. We are awaiting a few additional components to be added, and we should be ready to publish. Stay tuned to BellatorChristi.com and monitor the Bellator Christi Facebook page for the latest updates.
- Dr. Sherene Khouri's first solo book project is due sometime this year. Her book is entitled *Triune Relationality: Trinitarian Answer to Islamic Objections* and is being published through IVP Academic.
- Dr. Khouri also has an academic paper set to release through the *EMS Journal* entitled "The Practice of *Da'wa* to Promote Relationship Building."
- Dr. Deanna Huff is heading up a new book project specifically dealing with the ethics involved with using artificial intelligence. It is titled *Stewarding AI: Faithfully Using Creation Resources*. The book is set to be published through Nexus Publications, an imprint of Illative House Press, and is set to be released toward the end of 2024.
- Bellator Christi finished out 2023 with a bang! 2023 was the fourth highest viewed year in recent history. The website had 47,271 views in 2023. FYI: 2015 set the record for the most views with 61,085 views. Let's see if we can break 2015 in 2024! How do we break the record? Share your favorite articles and podcasts with others. Help us spread the word!
- The Bellator Christi Podcast is now found on Spotify. Due to some technical difficulties, we had to move the podcast's platform. For the latest episodes, look for "Bellator Christi Podcast" (no "the") in your favorite podcasting app. Be sure to tell a friend!

## Remaining Schedule for Season 7 of the Bellator Christi Podcast

- March 14: S7E24 The Institution of Marriage
- March 21: S7E25 Why Are We Here? (w. Dr. Leo Percer)
- March 28: S7E26 Reasons Why I Still Believe in the Resurrection of Jesus (Easter Special)
- April 4: S7E27 What Does It Mean to Be Human?: Humanity in an Age of Transhumanism (Panel Discussion with Dr. Deanna Huff and Ryan Pauly, cohosted with Dr. Michelle Johnson). *Rescheduled from March 7th due to sickness.*
- April 11: Hamartiology (Definition of Sin, Origin, Effects, and Christ's Victory Over Sin)
- April 18: S7Q6 The Question Zone Episode 6 (w. Curtis Evelo)
- April 25: *Why Creationism Still Matters* Panel Discussion



## Bellator Christi Podcast

By Dr. Brian Chilton

The Bellator Christi Podcast is a ministry of Dr. Brian Chilton and Bellator Christi Ministries. The podcast features discussions on Christian theology, philosophy, history, and biblical studies.

[Listen on Spotify](#)

[Send voice message](#)

# Tentative Schedule for Season 8 of the Bellator Christi Podcast

Due to added teaching responsibilities, the Bellator Christi Podcast will be shortened from 32 episodes to 24 episodes per season.

## Angelology/Demonology

### September 2024

- 9/5: S8E1 Origin and Purpose of Angels  
9/12: S8E2 Categories and Classification of Angels  
9/19: S8E3 Angelic Attributes  
9/26: S8E4 Angelic Abode—How Many Levels of Heaven

### October 2024

- 10/3: S8E5 Demonic Fall—When Did It Occur and What Prompted It?  
10/10: S8E6 Lucifer: The Satan, His Demons, and Influence  
10/17: S8E7 The Question Zone Episode 7

## Ecclesiology

- 10/24: S8E8 What is the Church and Its Purpose?  
10/31: S8E9 Baptism and the Eucharist

### November 2024

- 11/7: S8E10 The Role of the Pastor and Deacon  
11/14: S8E11 The Mission of the Church  
11/21: S8E12 The Question Zone Episode 8 (Last Show of Fall Semester)

## Winter Bible Study Series

### January 2025

- 1/2: S8E13 1 Peter 1  
1/9: S8E14 1 Peter 2  
1/16: S8E15 1 Peter 3  
1/23: S8E16 1 Peter 4  
1/30: S8E17 1 Peter 5

## Eschatology

### February 2025

- 2/6: No show due to son's birthday.  
2/13: S8E18 Views of the Book of Revelation, the Millennium, and Tribulation  
2/20: S8E19 The Intermediate State: Where Do We Go When We Die?  
2/27: S8E20 The Antichrist and Mark of the Beast

### March 2025

- 3/6: S8E21 The Purpose of National Israel and the Millennial Reign  
3/13: S8E22 The Rapture and Final Resurrection  
3/20: S8E23 Heaven and Hell (Include a Discussion on the Views of Hell)  
3/27: S8E24 Question Zone Episode 9

### April 2025

- 4/17: S8E25 Easter Special (Last Show of the Season)

## Website Stats (Fall 2023)

**September 2023:** *3,650 views*

Top 3 Articles:

- 1) Family is Your First Ministry
- 2) Why Did Paul Persecute the Christians? (Johnson)
- 3) Ten Divine Attributes of the Messiah

**October 2023:** *3,952 views*

Top 3 Articles:

- 1) Family is Your First Ministry
- 2) Why Did Paul Persecute the Christians? (Johnson)
- 3) 5 Steps to Proper Biblical Interpretation

**November 2023:** *4,911 views*

Top 3 Articles

- 1) The Christmas Tree and ... Evergreen
- 2) Family is Your First Ministry
- 3) Why Did Paul Persecute the Christians? (Johnson)

### **Comments:**

The fall of 2023 offered a strong showing for Bellator Christi articles.



## Website Stats (Winter 2024)

**December 2023:** *6,067 views*

Top 3 Articles

- 1) Christmas Tree and ... Evergreen
- 2) The Christmas Story in the Gospel of John
- 3) 5 Signs of a False Shepherd

**January 2024:** *6,420 views*

- 1) 5 Signs of a False Shepherd
- 2) Family is Your First Ministry
- 3) Why Did Paul Persecute the Christians? (Johnson)

**February 2024:** *5,566 views*

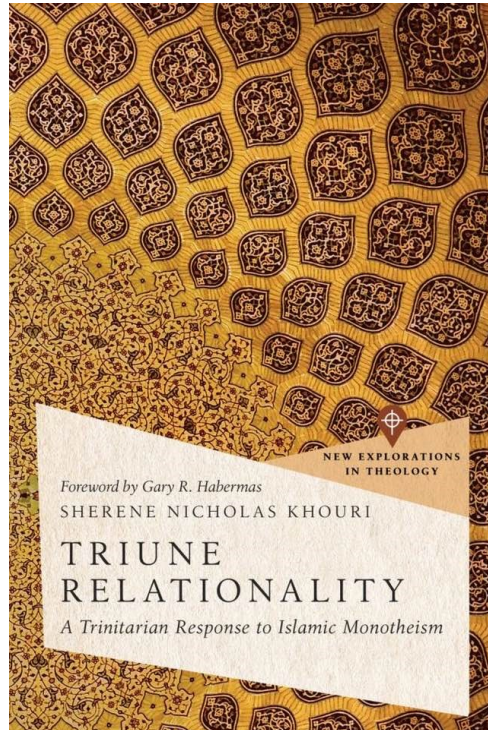
- 1) Family is Your First Ministry
- 2) Four Levels of Demonic Influence
- 3) Why Did Paul Persecute the Christians? (Johnson)

### **Comments:**

2024 is off to a huge start! The momentum from fall of 2023 flowed over into the winter season. With Easter coming ahead in spring and with some focused articles on the resurrection of Jesus, our hope is that 2024 could be the biggest year yet for Bellator Christi!

## New Publications from Bellator Christi Team Members

**Dr. Sherene Khouri—*Triune Relationality: A Trinitarian Response to Islamic Monotheism* (November 19, 2024—IVP Academic).**



Dr. Sherene Khouri launches her first solo book project with IVP Academic. Sherene Nicholas Khouri offers both historical and constructive responses to Islamic objections to the doctrine of the Trinity. Khouri considers arguments from Arabic Christian theologians and philosophers in the eighth to tenth centuries, primarily John of Damascus, Theodore Abū Qurrah, and Yaḥyā Ibn cAdī.

When Muslims expanded beyond the Arabic peninsula, Christians in occupied regions were spurred to defend the Trinity against the Islamic understanding of tawḥīd, the absolute oneness of Allah, and against misconceptions of Christian belief.

Khouri then applies the insights of these little-known thinkers to current theology and apologetics conversations. She makes the case for appealing to the common ground of God as the greatest conceived being, then arguing that such a being must be relational in nature. While Christians today debate models of the Trinity with each other and with Muslims, they can be confident that Christians throughout history have believed in triune relationality and found in the doctrine of the Trinity an invitation to personal relationship with the divine.

## New Publications (cont'd)

### **Bellator Christi Team—*Why Creationism Still Matters* (May 2024).**

Drs. Brian Chilton, Michelle Johnson, TJ Gentry, Deanna Huff, Sherene Khouri, Daniel Sloan, along with Tony Williams, Curtis Evelo, and other members of the Bellator Christi team discuss the importance of creationism, how it impacts how we view other matters of life and ministry, and why the topic is still of great value. The book is scheduled to release around May of 2024 through Nexus.

### **Drs. Deanna Huff, T. J. Gentry, Michelle Johnson, Brian Chilton, along with Ryan Pauly—*Stewarding AI: Faithfully Using Creation Resources* (late 2024—Nexus).**

Like it or not, artificial intelligence is here and is impacting our culture in far more ways that we may realize. Is AI necessarily bad? How should Christians view AI and, more importantly, how should they use AI? *Stewarding AI* will explore those issues and a lot more. As Dr. Huff states, “Technology is advancing at an exponential rate; it is important for us to approach its use with responsibility and ethics in mind. This book provides a guide for Christians who wish to steward technology faithfully, while also acknowledging both the benefits and drawbacks of modern AI technology.”

### **Brian Chilton—*Experiential Apologetics: Why Your Story Matters* (May 2025—Nexus)**

Dr. Brian Chilton recently announced that he signed a contract with Nexus Publishing for a book set to come out in 2025 entitled *Experiential Apologetics: Why Your Story Matters*. The book will argue that the apologist should not avoid personal testimonies, as they offer a holistic case for the Christian faith, much in the manner of Augustine of Hippo.

### **Brian Chilton—*Conversations about Heaven: Difficult Questions about Our Eternal Home*. (Now available—Resource)**

In his final months at Huntsville Baptist Church in Yadkinville, North Carolina, Dr. Brian Chilton had the opportunity to speak with a lady named Sandy Riddle. Sandy wanted to speak with Dr. Chilton because she had some deep-seated questions about heaven that had always troubled her. This book features details about her questions and the answers provided in Scripture.



## Publication Schedule: Spring 2024

Date	Contributor	Editor/Publisher
3/3/24	Brian Chilton	Johnson
3/10/24	Deanna Huff	Johnson
3/17/24	Bruce Price	Huff
3/24/24	Scott Reynolds	Gentry
3/31/24	Easter Sunday Special	Chilton
4/7/24	Daniel Sloan	Chilton
4/14/24	Tony Williams	Johnson
4/21/24	Tim Woods	Huff
4/28/24	Justin Angelos	Gentry
5/5/24	Jerry Bogacz	Chilton
5/12/24	Brian Chilton	Johnson
5/19/24	Curtis Evelo	Huff
5/26/24	Michelle Johnson	Gentry
6/2/24	Leo Percer	Chilton
6/9/24	TJ Gentry	Johnson
6/16/24	Sherene Khouri	Huff
6/23/24	Tom Knoff	Gentry

## Publication Schedule: Summer 2024

Date	Contributor	Editor/Publisher
6/30/24	Leo Percer	Chilton
7/7/24	Bruce Price	Chilton
7/14/24	Scott Reynolds	Johnson
7/21/24	Daniel Sloan	Huff
7/28/24	Tony Williams	Gentry
8/4/24	Tim Woods	Chilton
8/11/24	Justin Angelos	Johnson
8/18/24	Jerry Bogacz	Huff
8/25/24	Brian Chilton	Gentry
9/1/24	Curtis Evelo	Chilton
9/8/24	T.J. Gentry	Johnson
9/15/24	Michelle Johnson	Huff
9/22/24	Deanna Huff	Gentry
9/29/24	Sherene Khouri	Chilton

## Top 10 Most Viewed Articles of 2023

The following articles topped the charts for the most viewed articles of 2023. If you haven't read them yet, be sure to read check them out very soon.

1) **Family Is Your First Ministry: (-)** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2019/03/11/family-is-your-first-ministry/>.

2) **Why Did Paul Persecute the Christians? (Johnson): (-)** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2022/02/27/why-did-paul-persecute-the-christians/>.

3) **The Christmas Tree and Biblical Symbolism of the Evergreen: (n/a)** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2022/12/23/the-christmas-tree-and-biblical-symbolism-of-the-evergreen/>.

4) **5 Signs of a False Shepherd: (+11)** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2016/11/27/5-signs-of-a-false-shepherd/>.

5) **8 Reasons Why the Shroud of Turin Might Be the Burial Cloth of Jesus: (+3)** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2017/04/18/8-reasons-why-the-shroud-of-turin-might-be-the-burial-cloth-of-jesus/>.

6) **Ten Divine Attributes of the Messiah: (-)** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2017/12/05/ten-divine-attributes-of-the-messiah/>.

7) **The Christmas Story in the Gospel of John: (-4)** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2015/12/24/the-christmas-story-in-the-gospel-of-john/>.

8) **Voltaire's Prediction, Home, and the Bible Society: Truth or Myth? (Merritt): (-3)** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2019/03/18/voltaires-prediction-home-and-the-bible-society-truth-or-myth/>.

9) **The Quality of God's Mercy (Numbers 14:18-19): (-5)** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2016/05/05/qualities-of-gods-mercy-numbers-1418-19/>.

10) **7 Questions the Bible Answers about Miracles: (-)** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2016/05/09/7-questions-the-bible-answers-about-miracles/>.

# Top 10 New Articles of 2023

The following articles were those that topped the list in 2023 that were newly published between December of 2022 through November of 2023.

- 1) **Christmas Tree and Biblical Symbolism (Chilton):** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2022/12/23/the-christmas-tree-and-biblical-symbolism-of-the-evergreen/>.
- 2) **Four Levels of Demonic Influence (Chilton):** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2023/05/05/four-levels-of-demonic-influence/>.
- 3) **Summary of “On the Incarnation” (Bogacz):** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2022/12/24/summary-of-on-the-incarnation/>.
- 4) **The Shepherd Metaphor Spotlights the Character of God (Huff):** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2023/03/12/shepherd-metaphor-character-of-god/>.
- 5) **The Case for the Eternal Cosmic Observer (Chilton):** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2023/01/22/the-case-for-an-eternal-cosmic-observer/>.
- 6) **The Amarna Letters (Reynolds):** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2023/08/06/the-amarna-letters/>.
- 7) **Trying to Make Sense of Evil and Suffering (Angelos):** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2023/02/05/trying-to-make-sense-of-evil-and-suffering/>.
- 8) **Biblical Archaeology and Apologetics (Price):** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2023/04/17/biblical-archaeology-and-apologetics/>.
- 9) **Seven Reasons Why Every Christian Should Study Islam (Khouri):** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2023/10/22/seven-reasons-why-every-christian-should-study-islam/>.
- 10) **Tied: Metaphysical Apologetics (Williams):** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2023/01/29/metaphysical-apologetics/>.
- 10) **Tied: Amazing Grace? (Gentry):** <https://bellatorchristi.com/2023/03/05/amazing-grace/>.

## Brian Chilton



Brian Chilton is the Founder of Bellator Christi Ministries. He first established the online ministry in November of 2012. Brian lives with his wife and teenage son in Pilot Mountain, NC. He earned a Doctor of Philosophy in Theology and Apologetics with a minor in Church History from Liberty University, where he also received a Master of Divinity degree in Theological Studies. Prior to his studies at Liberty, he received a Bachelor of Science in Religious Studies and Philosophy at Gardner-Webb University in Boiling Springs, NC. He completed a unit of Clinical Pastoral Education at Wake Forest University School of Medicine. Dr. Chilton works as a clinical hospice chaplain and is an Adjunct Professor of Apologetics at Carolina College of Biblical Studies. Brian published the book *Layman's Manual on Christian Apologetics* in 2019 and *Conversations about Heaven* in 2023. He is working on a future book project called *Experiential Apologetics: Why Your Story Matters* and two collaborative book projects—*Why Creationism Still Matters* and *Stewarding AI*, headed by Dr. Deanna Huff. Brian can be reached at **bchilton77@outlook.com** or at **(336) 426-8685**.

## Michelle Johnson



Michelle Johnson earned a Ph.D. in Theology and Apologetics at Liberty University. She also earned her M.A. in Theological Studies and her M.Div. in Professional Ministries at Liberty University. Michelle graduated from the University of Minnesota with her undergraduate degrees. She and her husband Steve live in Mankato, Minnesota. Michelle and Steve attend Wooddale Church in Eden Prairie where Michelle serves on the Global Partner Care Team. In addition to her love of theology and apologetics, Michelle also has a passion for historical studies, particularly the theology of the Patristics. When she is not spending time reading or writing, Michelle can often be found dreaming of her next travel adventure or enjoying a great cup of coffee. Michelle Johnson serves as the Executive Vice-President and Managing Editor of Bellator Christi Ministries. Michelle can be reached at **johnsonmk87@gmail.com**.



## Deanna Huff



Deanna Huff serves as the Associate Vice President of Spiritual Care and Outreach as well as a Publisher for our team. Deanna Huff is a wife and mother. She has been teaching and training for the last twenty years equipping people to know their Christian faith and share it with others. Deanna has led many seminars for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, Oklahoma Ladies Retreat, and the State Evangelism Conference. She taught high school students for ten years at Christian Heritage Academy, in Bible, Universal History, Apologetics and Philosophy. Deanna earned a Doctor of Philosophy in Theology and Apologetics from Liberty University. She holds a Master of Theology in Apologetics and Worldview from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, a Master of Divinity with Biblical Languages from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Oklahoma. Deanna is heading up a collaborative book project entitled *Stewarding AI*: Deanna can be reached at [deannahuff@outlook.com](mailto:deannahuff@outlook.com).

## TJ Gentry



Thomas J. Gentry (a.k.a., TJ Gentry) serves as the Associate Vice President of Publication and Communications as well as a Publisher for Bellator Christi Ministries. He oversees the Illative House Press publishing company along with his daughter, Ireland Dillard. TJ earned a Doctor of Philosophy in Theology and Apologetics from Liberty University and holds numerous other doctorates and graduate degrees from North-West University, Carolina University, and Holy Apostles College. TJ lives with his wife and family in West Frankfort, IL and serves as the Senior Pastor of First Christian Church of West Frankfort. TJ has published numerous works including *Pulpit Apologist*, *Absent from the Body, Present with the Lord*, and *You Shall Be My Witnesses: Reflections on Sharing the Gospel*. He has a new book entitled *Leaving Calvinism: Finding Grace* to be published soon. TJ can be reached at [thomas.j.gentry@gmail.com](mailto:thomas.j.gentry@gmail.com).

**The Contributor/Publisher Schedule Has Moved to Page 9 and 10 of the Newsletter.**

The Fall/Winter edition of the Sword & Shield will be published September of 2024.

**Mission of Bellator Christi Ministries**

Bellator Christi Ministries is a non-denominational online theological and apologetics ministry that exists to provide biblical and theological education. The site serves to teach Christian doctrine while defending the Christian faith by using a variety of means (written, audio, video, etc.). The ministry is academically centered, but the content is devoted to

a popular-level audience. The mission of the ministry is to take up the sword of Christian theology and the shield of apologetics while entering the arena of ideas. The goal is to evangelize and edify the body of Christ, to the glory of God.

Bellator Christi Ministries

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