

Stephen H. Webb, theologian and author, dies at 54

by [Christian Century staff](#) in the [April 13, 2016](#) issue

Stephen H. Webb, theologian and author, perhaps best known for his work on animal rights, died March 5 at age 54 in Brownsburg, Indiana. He died by suicide, the county coroner said.

Webb taught religion and philosophy for 25 years at Wabash College. He left the school in 2013 to focus on writing. The college's tribute to Webb notes that in addition to his regular courses on theology, he taught courses on Bob Dylan, men and masculinity, and existentialism.

"A master of the Socratic method, he was known for the energy, wit, and learning that he brought to the classroom," the college wrote.

His most recent book was *Mormon Christianity: What Other Christians Can Learn from the Latter-day Saints*. He also wrote *On God and Dogs: A Christian Theology of Compassion for Animals* and *The Gifting God: A Trinitarian Ethics of Excess*.

Writing for the *Christian Century* in 2002, [Webb addressed the politics of food](#).

"That we so ravenously eat what we know we shouldn't is one of the surest signs that our stomachs are out of alignment with our heads," he wrote.

Webb, who was a founder of the Christian Vegetarian Association, also wrote about the ethics of eating meat.

"We cannot go back to the diet of Eden, but we can develop theologies that treat food as a religious concern," he wrote. "One measure of the practical relevance of every theology should be how it helps us to find God's grace in the food we eat, so that our mealtime prayers really speak to what is at hand. Every meal should anticipate the heavenly banquet of the peaceable kingdom, where everyone will have enough to eat and no blood is shed."

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