

Lutheran scholar, archaeologist Edgar M. Krentz dies at 93

by [Dawn Araujo-Hawkins](#) in the [December 1, 2021](#) issue



(Photo courtesy of the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago)

New Testament scholar and archaeologist Edgar M. Krentz died on October 31. He was 93.

Krentz was perhaps best known for his 1975 book *The Historical-Critical Method*, which provided an introduction to and survey of historical criticism as a means of biblical interpretation. He was also a longtime professor at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, teaching his last class in 2018 despite retiring 20 years earlier.

Krentz's interest in the historical-critical method began in 1963.

While on sabbatical from a teaching position at Concordia Seminary, Krentz spent a year at the University of Tübingen, where he encountered Ernst Käsemann—the

German theologian who developed the criterion of double dissimilarity as a means of determining the authenticity of the sayings attributed to Jesus in the New Testament.

According to a memorial posted by Krentz's family, it was while working with Käsemann that Krentz first realized that one could "combine committed Lutheranism with radical New Testament interpretation."

In a tribute posted to LSTC's website, historian Kurt K. Hendel, the interim director of advanced studies at the school, called Krentz a faithful servant of Christ and an exemplary teacher, noting that the breadth and depth of Krentz's knowledge was particularly impressive.

"His exegesis of the scriptural texts was enhanced by his archeological insights and his extensive engagement with Greco-Roman philosophy and Mediterranean culture," Hendel said. "He deeply appreciated the liturgy as well as the diverse artistic heritage of the church. His ecumenical consciousness was accompanied by a commitment to the Lutheran confessional tradition."