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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**ECU's Thomas Harriot Voyages of Discovery Lecture Series Features
17th Annual Jarvis Lecture on Christianity and Culture**

Greenville – What does it mean to be Christians living in an empire? This question is as old as Christianity itself, and for many American Christians it is as current today as it has always been.

Dr. Marcus J. Borg, Hundere Distinguished Professor of Religion and Culture at Oregon State University, will address this question in his delivery of the 17th annual Jarvis Lecture on Christianity and Culture at East Carolina University. Borg's lecture on "Christians in An Age of Empire: Then and Now," will be held at 7 p.m. Tuesday, November 18, in Wright Auditorium.

This season, the Jarvis lecture is part of the 2008-09 Voyages of Discovery Lecture Series sponsored by the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences. During the lecture, Borg will examine the conflict between Christianity and empire "then," for the sake of illuminating Christian responsibility "now."

Known as one of the leading historical Jesus scholars of this generation, Borg has authored more than 10 books, including two best sellers, *Jesus: A New Vision* and *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*. His most recent book is *Jesus: Uncovering the Life, Teachings and Relevance of a Religious Revolutionary* (2006).

An advocate of a pantheistic conception of the divine, Borg has lectured widely in this country, giving talks at the Smithsonian and Chautauqua Institutions, and overseas in Austria, Belgium, England, Germany, Hungary, Israel and South Africa. His writings have been translated into many languages, including Chinese, Dutch, French, Italian, German and Korean.

In works such as *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time*, subtitled *Taking the Bible Seriously but Not Literally*, Borg offers an "historical-metaphorical approach" to reading the Bible, claiming that it is the "Word of God" expressed metaphorically.

Borg sees philosophy as primarily concerned with the role of ideas in our lives. "Ideas matter," Borg says, "much more than we commonly think they do - especially our world views and values, namely our ideas about what is real and how we are to live. We receive such ideas from our culture as we grow up, and unless we examine them, we will not be free persons but will to a large extent live out the agenda of our socialization."

The Voyages of Discovery Lecture Series is made possible through generous contributions from the Dean's Advancement Council of the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences, the East Carolina Alumni Association and additional friends and supporters of the college. For additional information, contact Dr. John Tucker, director of the series, at tuckerjo@ecu.edu or 252.328.1028, or visit www.ecu.edu/voyages.

The Jarvis Lecture is co-sponsored by the Religious Studies program in the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences and the Jarvis Memorial United Methodist Church. For additional information, go to the Religious Studies web site at www.ecu.edu/religionprogram. To receive occasional mailings pertaining to religion-related cultural and academic events in the area, send your email address to Calvin Mercer, co-director of the Religious Studies program, at mercerc@ecu.edu.

Complimentary tickets for the lecture are available through the ECU Central Ticket Office by calling 252.328.4788, 1.800.ECU.ARTS or (voice/TTY) 252.328.4736. Tickets also will be available at the box office window in Wright Auditorium prior to the lecture. Individuals requesting accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) should call 252.737.1016 (voice/TTY) at least 48 hours prior to the event.

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