



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**PERKINS ANNOUNCES WENDLAND-COOK PROFESSORSHIP
INAUGURAL LECTURE, OCTOBER 8, 2009**

Dallas, Texas – Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University announces a lecture commemorating the establishment of the Wendland-Cook Professorship at Perkins, to be given by Dr. Joerg Rieger, the first scholar to hold that professorship. The lecture, “Speaking Truth to Power—With a Twist: Re-envisioning the Task of Theology and the Academy,” will be presented on Thursday, October 8, at 5:00 p.m. in the Great Hall of Elizabeth Perkins Prothro Hall at Perkins on the SMU campus. A reception will follow in Kirby Hall Parlor.

In the spring of 2008 SMU received a \$1 million gift from Barbara Cook Wendland and Erroll Wendland and the Joe B. and Louise P. Cook Foundation to establish the Wendland-Cook Professorship in Constructive Theology at Perkins. The Wendlands, long time supporters of both Perkins and SMU, have designated holders of the professorship to make substantial contributions to the academic study of systematic and constructive theology that address current church and social issues; to address issues of inequality of power and to show commitment to the liberation of all people, the promotion of justice, and the encouragement of nonviolence; to be versed in current critical theory; to have international reputation and involvement; and to aim not only at communicating widely in the academic world but especially at inspiring laity and clergy at the local-church level to expand their theological perspectives.

In December of last year, Dr. Joerg Rieger, Professor of Systematic Theology at Perkins, was named by the University as Perkins' first Wendland-Cook Professor of Constructive Theology effective on January 1 of this year. For more than two decades Rieger has worked to bring together theology and the struggles for justice and liberation that mark our age. His work addresses the relation of theology to public life, using tools from cultural studies, critical theory, and religious studies, and reflecting on the misuse of power in politics and economics. Known among his generation of theologians for his prolific and visionary writing, his books include *Christ and Empire: A*

