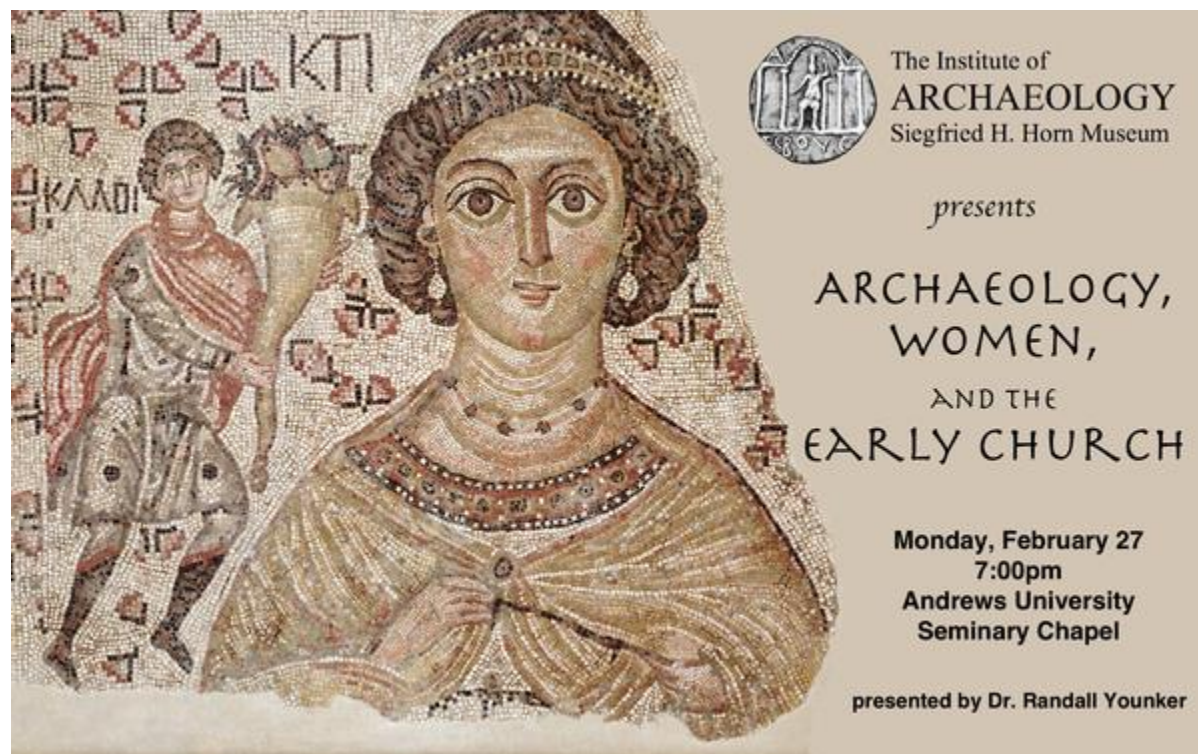


# Archaeology, Women & The Early Church

2017 Horn Lectureship Series

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By: Konner Dent

In the ongoing conversation regarding gender roles in the church, a field which seems to get little attention is the realm of archaeology. However, analysis of excavation sites provides an expanded perspective of gender differences in the church, and on Monday, Feb. 27, Randall Younker, professor of archaeology, will address these findings during the annual [Horn Lectureship Series](#) at Andrews University.

“The presentation will deal with the role and importance of women in the early Christian church based upon archaeological and ancient written sources,” states Younker.

Delving into church life in the [Byzantine empire](#) (330–1453 AD), this lecture will cover demographic studies which show women significantly outnumbering men in the early church—especially from 100–400 AD—and taking on a variety of leadership roles.

The recent discovery of female skeletons in Sicily buried in important regalia close to a church—a place reserved for religiously important individuals—offers some insights on the topic of women in church history.

“Various ancient sources indicate that roles for women in the ancient Christian church included being church sponsors and patrons, deacons and, at times, even bishops,” says Younker.

This evidence brings new perspective to modern discussions on gender roles and church leadership. The lectureship will cover recent scholarly studies that debate the history and meaning of ordination as well as the titles "presbyter" and "bishop" during the first centuries of the Christian church.

The Horn Lectureship will take place in the Seminary Chapel on the campus of Andrews University. The event is free and open to the public. Co-curricular credit will be available for Andrews students.

The Horn Lectureship Series is sponsored by the [Siegfried H. Horn Museum](#) on the campus of Andrews University, with events held two to four times each school year. The Museum is part of the Institute of Archaeology, and is named for its first curator at its establishment in 1970. The Museum houses over 8,500 ancient Near-Eastern artifacts and over 3,000 ancient [cuneiform](#) tablets from [Sumerian times](#) through the [Achaemenid period](#).

The Museum is currently closed for renovations and will reopen in the spring of 2017.

## Related Links

- [More about the Byzantine empire](#)
- [The Siegfried H. Horn Museum & Institute of Archaeology](#)

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