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The October 2006 issue of *The Lutheran*, the magazine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, is devoted to the relationship between evolution and religion. Included is a detailed [interview](#) [4] with Judge John E. Jones III, the judge who ruled against the constitutionality of teaching "intelligent design" in his December 20, 2005, decision in *Kitzmiller*. Jones is a Lutheran himself, a fact widely noted by the media during the *Kitzmiller* trial.

*The Lutheran's* coverage of Jones is notable for delving into the judge's religious upbringing in more depth than previous media coverage. Jones relates that he was raised by Presbyterian parents in Orwigsburg, Pennsylvania, but since there was no Presbyterian congregation in the town, the family joined a United Church of Christ congregation, where Jones was confirmed. In 1982, after marrying a Lutheran, Jones joined Trinity Lutheran Church in Pottsville, Pennsylvania, which he and his family still attend today.

In the interview, Jones stressed the importance of judicial independence and the relationship between the law and politics. Replying to critics who objected to Jones's ruling that "intelligent design" is a specific religious position and not science, Jones explained, "Both sides asked me to render a decision on that precise issue," continuing, "Had I not done so, there was every chance that this same issue would have arisen before another tribunal."

Responding to accusations that his decision was judicial "activism" and betrayed his political allies, Jones commented, "[A]s a federal judge, I'm charged with focusing on legal precedents, the rule of law and the U.S. Constitution. ... If I had disregarded the facts and *invented* a new test, other than those tests offered by the Supreme Court, that would have made me an activist judge. These values are not Republican or Democratic. They are *American* values."

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