

Campus Ministry Committee

This is a milestone year for us as 2007 marks the 100th anniversary of Lutheran Campus Ministry. This remarkable legacy began in Madison, Wisconsin and now extends to over 180 campus ministries at state and private colleges and universities all across the United States. Here in the Indiana-Kentucky Synod, we are blessed to have five full-time campus ministries as our partners in mission.

Associate in Ministry Rodelyn McPherson is the longest tenured of our campus ministers, serving at Ball State University. You will find that ministry in a house known as 'The Lutheran Center'. A hallmark of the Ball State campus ministry is the peer ministers who serve each year to reach out to other students, listen to them, and lead programs for the ministry.

Pastor Steve Rye is the campus pastor at Purdue University. Their significant accomplishment in the past year was the relocation of the ministry to a house that sits on the busiest corner of campus, with a 'winking Luther' billboard on the side announcing their presence. This ministry has a close partnership with Our Savior Lutheran Church, with both the congregation and the campus ministry benefiting greatly from that relationship.

Pastor Barry Neese serves our newest campus ministry, located at the University of Kentucky in Lexington. This ministry is in partnership with the Episcopalians, who provide the ministry facilities, St. Augustine's Chapel in the center of campus. In the past year Pastor Barry has helped one student prepare for baptism and another prepare for confirmation.

We are also in partnership with the Episcopal church in Indianapolis. Episcopal priest Father Charles Allen serves this ministry which calls itself 'Grace Unlimited.' The ministry is primarily focused on Butler University, but there is also outreach to IUPUI. Last year this ministry sponsored a 'Biology and Belief' discussion series at Butler that was well attended by students and faculty.

Pastor Kelli Skram and Diaconal Minister Jeff Schacht are the married couple who lead the campus ministry at Indiana University in Bloomington. They have only been on campus since last July and they have jumped in with great gusto. This ministry is also lodged in a house, which is a place for Bible Study, exploring faith, pastoral conversation, and hanging out. In February, the IU campus ministry hosted the first 'Campus Cornhole Championship' (otherwise known as Tailgate Toss). They raised over \$1,500 for the benefit of the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, an organization committed to improving the lives of the very youngest victims of HIV/AIDS.

Campus ministry is a continual 'mission outpost' of our church. Every year our campus ministry staff works to re-establish a worshipping community, plan educational programs, and involve students in servant ministry. At the start of each school year a remnant returns from the previous year and the development work begins anew. During the 2005-2006 academic year, our campus ministries combined to welcome over 300 students to worship. Nearly 100 students took part in a faith development program. Over 50 students took part in some sort of service project, including traveling to New Orleans over Spring Break. The campus ministry staff made one-on-one contacts with nearly 600 students and families.

Campus ministry stands in the gap of a young person's life in that time between being nurtured in their home congregation and the one they will settle into after graduation. Campus ministry

seeks to bridge the gap between church and world—many new things begin on campus and our campus ministries seek to be in dialogue with that experience. Campus ministries empower and equip people to fill in the leadership gaps within our congregations. Indeed, campus ministry is one of the best pipelines to our seminaries to provide pastors and trained lay leaders in our churches. And for every Pastor, Associate in Ministry, Deaconess, or Diaconal Minister that comes out of campus ministry, there is a dozen or more committed lay people who will serve in congregations as council members, committee chairs, officers, teachers, ministry leaders, and so on.

I would like to thank everyone who has served on the Campus Ministry Committee during the past year: Julie Slavens, Darlene Hurd, Dale Austin, Charles Sweet, and Pastor James Hilleson. We are joined by Pastor Bill Gafkjen from the synod staff and Pastor Marcus Pera, the ELCA Coordinator for Campus Ministry in our region. All of the campus ministry staff also serve as advisory members of the committee. This group has put a great deal of energy this year into the celebration of the centennial anniversary and conducting the centennial fund appeal. The \$40,000 decrease in campus ministry funding from the synod in 2007—a result of the budget balancing efforts of the Synod Council in light of decreasing congregational benevolence—has also put the campus ministry committee in the position of spending a good deal of its energy on exploring a wide range of creative approaches to keeping all five ministries alive and thriving financially. In 2007, the combined campus ministry funding from the synod and the national church allows us to provide grants to our campus ministries that cover only 50.8% of the compensation and benefits for the campus ministry staff. The local ministry has to raise the remainder of the staff cost, plus the costs of doing ministry: facilities, supplies, program expenses, etc. This is proving to be a daunting task. Unfortunately, the current state of synod finances necessitates that we seriously consider the last resort possibility that we may have to reduce the number of campus ministries in order to ensure that the remaining ministries can continue on solid and reliable financial ground. Before considering that last resort, however, the committee is embarking on a strategic process for exploring creative and effective ways to configure and fund each ministry so that they may continue to faithfully empower, equip and encourage the people of God to make Christ known.

We look forward to the 2007 Synod Assembly which will include a special recognition of our campus ministries and celebration of the centennial anniversary of Lutheran Campus Ministry. Our committee and campus ministry staff would welcome the opportunity to share the story of campus ministry with congregations and groups throughout the synod - feel free to contact me or one of the campus ministry staff directly. You can find links to all of our campus ministry sites on the I-K synod website: www.iksynod.org.

For the Campus Ministry Committee,

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