CAMPUS MINISTRIES:
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES
Assumptions can be dangerous

This edition of *Issues in Christian Education* unpacks many frequently held assumptions about campus ministry. For example:

- Rev. Carl Selle challenges the assumption that our culture is "still permeated with the content of the Christian message."
- Rev. Mark Heilman confronts the assumption that "young people want to go to college to leave home and have their freedom and independence."
- Dr. George Kirup contends that on Ivy League campuses, where many assume quite the opposite, "there is a desire for greater intellectual understanding of the faith."
- Greg Witto reveals intriguing statistics and an inspiring portrait of the Millennials for those who assume this generation is just like the Baby Boomers or Generation X. He notes that "as a group, Millennials are unlike any other youth generation in living memory . . . [and] will entirely recast the image of youth from downbeat and alienated to upbeat and engaged."
- Rev. Greg Fairow reminds us that assumptions about methods of funding campus ministry are changing rapidly, and without careful thought, prayer and attention, the church may lose some of its most important mission outposts.
- Rev. Kent Pierce observes from first-hand experience in campus ministry that "there isn’t a 'one size fits all answer' as to how a missionary campus ministry is to be formulated."

Wow! Assumptions. Assumptions about campus ministry are many. Some of them are dangerous. However, the reality about the ministry taking place through campus ministry on or near hundreds of college and university campuses across our nation may surprise you. With "over 16 million college students on 3,700 campuses in the United States [and] approximately nine million are between the ages of 19 and 25” (Pierce), the opportunities for outreach, Gospel proclamation, leadership development, bridge building between campus and community, volunteer service and service learning are enormous and have the potential to have "seismic consequences for America.” Campus ministry is vital if we are to continue to be salt and light to all people everywhere. It is another mission field to which God is calling His church to go and make disciples in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

May God bless all who serve and are served by campus ministries. May God bless all who minister to college and university students as the Good News of Jesus Christ is proclaimed and lived.

Brian L. Friedrich, President
Lest We Miss the Opportunity

Some Christians will always be "arm-chair" missionaries, others will long to faithfully serve in the far reaches of our globe, and still others will choose to be fearfully silent in the face of witness opportunities. But praise God, some missionaries have caught the vision for sharing the Good News of Jesus right in their own backyard, such as a homemaker intentionally praying for the "critical event" with her Japanese neighbor, a teenager while stocking shelves choosing to invite an animist Hmong friend to her youth group meeting, a sales representative willing to offer to take a non-American associate home for dinner.

A segment of these mission-minded believers is consciously burdened by the large number of students on campuses who are living without a life-sustaining relationship with Jesus Christ. Statistics point out that 70 percent of college and university students are unchurched. Many Christians seem to believe we can let this fact slide because they're convinced that the majority of these students already have had numerous opportunities to hear the Law/Gospel message.

Compared to many other cultures, some believe that ours is still permeated with the content of the Christian message. The assumption is that not all have heard, but many have, and that seems to give us reason to sit back believing that we have done our work. Complacency provides no vision to see the unbeliever right in our own backyard.

A unique mission field exists among the 720,000 international students attending our colleges and universities. Ninety percent are not living as sisters and brothers of Jesus. In fact, the majority of these international students may never hear the name of Jesus spoken in a positive light. Many may never seek, much less read, the Holy Scriptures. Statistics tell us that more than forty countries of origin (20 percent of the sending countries) are either completely or partially closed to the presentation of the Good News. The majority of international students have never had the chance to be involved in the "critical event."

Ablaze! calls us to seek openings to intentionally speak about that hope with those who know no such hope. We are called to be servants among those who know nothing about the total servanthood of Jesus the Christ for all people. Our call as missionaries gives us "carte blanche" when it comes to reflecting the love of the Savior. Wally Brunner, Frankenmuth, Michigan, says, "If I am a Christian, I should be willing to live the message. Wherever there is a Christian, there is a missionary. Wherever there is a missionary, there is a mission field."

We dare not miss the ripe harvest field of the international student community. Dr. Glen Zumwalt, formerly at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, characterized international students in this way: "young and energetic, intellectual, world leaders in the making, women and men coming to this country speaking our language, and people bound to return home."

Sharing with an international student is a "blessing given—blessing received" experience. International students are open to conversation and often are eager to speak freely about spiritual things. A culture lesson is readily available to those who want to travel overseas. The discovery is usually made that genuine warmth and hospitality are a reality among the peoples of the world. Non-believers often afford an easy invitation to share faith as a relationship grows.

The LCMS has made an excellent beginning through its partner mission society, International Student Ministry, Inc. (ISM, Inc.). In 1992 when our church body designated North America as a mission field, we counted five ministries intentionally reaching out among the international student community. By 2005, that number had grown to almost 75. But with more than 3,000 university campuses, there’s still work to do. Tragically, many international students and family members still return to their homes without having heard a clear presentation of the Gospel.

We can’t afford to miss the opportunity while God gives an open door to so many countries through international students. Already, more than 7,000 Christians are praying weekly for international student ministry through ISM, Inc. This is the time to be bold to give flesh to our prayers through a public testimony of word and deed witness.

Praise God, we’re beginning to see the backyard mission field. Would it be possible now to set a visionary goal for each international student to have opportunity to hear the clear testimony that God sent Jesus to love us from death to life?

International students are here today and gone tomorrow. The critical time for our sharing the Good News is none other than right now, lest we miss the opportunity forever.

The Rev. Carl Selle
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Campus Ministry: Connecting Students and Adults

Derek Bok, the former president of Harvard University, asked Richard J. Light, a professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, to study students on campus. After ten years of study, Light published a book, Making the Most of College: Students Speak Their Minds. In this book, Light discovered, much to his surprise, that students wanted interaction with adults.
He had anticipated that they would want the leaders of the college to treat them as grown-ups and get out of their way. Instead, 70 to 75 percent said, "We need advice. We don't know what to do. How do we know which is the right history course to choose? How do we know how much time to spend on extracurriculars or homework?"

As a result of his studies, Light says that the most important advice he gives to his advisees is to encourage them to set a goal each semester of getting to know a faculty member or another adult. Not only can these adults provide good direction about what they are doing in college, but they provide a vital link between what they are studying in school and how they can apply it in the future.

So often we assume that young people want to go to college to leave home and have their freedom and independence. They don't want anyone to tell them when to get up, what to wear, and what to do in their daily lives. They think differently than the generations before them. They are able to think like "Windows" on a computer—doing many tasks at the same time. Thus we send them off to college. Young people who have had lots of contact with adults in high school through their teachers, guidance counselors, coaches, and band leaders (not to mention their parents), go off to college and are in many cases cut off from significant contact with adults.

This transition also involves young peoples' relationship to God and the church. Though teens have had many opportunities to do things on their own—drive a car, go on trips, shop by themselves and keep a bank account—church is something they do with their families, with their adult parents. When they go off to college, they not only can be cut-off from meaningful relationships with adults, but also with those who have supported them in their faith life.

The church then has a tremendous challenge, but an even greater opportunity to make an impact on the lives of college students. The church includes many adults who have the life experience, the time and the faith development to be meaningful adult examples to these young people. But how do we get those two groups together? How do we build bridges between the community church and the college campus?

College campuses are not adverse to help from churches. The perception might be that secular colleges want to enforce the idea of the separation of church and state. They are seen as places which promote the political correctness and scientific naturalism that are so opposed to our Christian faith. But colleges are institutions that have to deal with the social and spiritual needs of students while working with increasingly tightened budgets. They recognize the important role parents still have in the students' lives and see the churches as helpful links to the parents. Many colleges welcome involvement from the local community, especially volunteers.

One example which clearly comes to mind involves the many international students in this country. Most of them come to this country and spend many years here without ever stepping into the home of an American. Colleges love churches and church volunteers who offer to provide opportunities for internationals to visit their homes and spend time conversing in English. These volunteers don't need any special skills. As one college instructor who teaches English to international students told me, "If English is your native language, you are already an expert in it. Just by talking in English, you can help them."

However, there are other ways that churches can get involved. Increasingly colleges are looking for opportunities to link college studies with real life. They have programs to encourage students to do volunteer work in their local communities. Churches can provide people who need help, such as the elderly who need someone to visit or do chores around their houses, children who need to be watched during parent activities or helped in Sunday School, and the poor who need assistance with food or home repair. These activities place students into contact with adults, people who help link them to the "real world" off campus.

Professor Light noted in his study that one of the most important things college students need to learn is how to manage their time. Time management is second nature to adults who have dealt with careers, marriage and parenting. Contacts between students and adults in churches can help young people to see how to better make use of their time.

Best of all, the church can help to engage students and adults who are Christians. When college students encounter a Christian adult from a congregation, they encounter Christ, who dwells in us. They can see a model of how Christian faith can be a vital part of an adult's life in the world they will encounter after college.

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Ivy League Campuses: A Mission Field of Great Importance

As a graduate of Harvard University and the University of California—Berkeley, the subject of campus ministry in the Ivy League is of importance to me. As an undergraduate at Harvard, I was active in InterVarsity, and when I graduated in 2000 and went to Berkeley, I involved myself in a similar group. While I
was at Berkeley, I became a Lutheran and, recognizing the lack of a Lutheran ministry there, helped to found Lutheran Student Fellowship at Berkeley.

(“Ivy League” is used here to refer to all top academic institutions.) In thinking about campus ministry in the Ivy League, I ask myself: “What should be the difference between campus ministries at Ivy League schools and other campus ministries?” A second question is why Ivy League campuses should be a focus of the church.

Ivy League campuses are the focus of such organizations as InterVarsity. One reason is that Ivy League schools produce a large number of staff workers and national leaders. Colleges, especially Ivy League campuses, provide a tremendous recruiting ground for future pastors and church leaders. Moreover, Ivy League graduates are likely to be in influential positions in society and would be able to effectively reach people that others cannot. The impact that well-catechized, well-educated, young people have on their congregations after graduating is inestimable. The fact that college graduates are spread out, even across the globe, makes campus ministry all the more crucial in our mission of spreading the Gospel to all nations.

However, I am not aware of any thriving LCMS ministries on Ivy League campuses, although I have not done a careful study. The reasons for this are no doubt manifold. For example, most of these institutions are located on the coasts where the LCMS is not strong. There is no LCMS church in Cambridge (population 100,000) where Harvard and Massachusetts Institute of Technology are located, and only one LCMS church is located in Boston. In Berkeley, there once was a thriving LCMS campus ministry but during the 1960s it left. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and is currently part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Therefore, for more than 25 years there was no LCMS campus ministry at Berkeley. When the District was approached about the need for one, we were told to start it ourselves. When a ministry was launched, we were told that there was no money available to help pay a campus pastor. Thus, a strategically crucial opportunity for mission work has been almost ignored by the District.

Perhaps the most important point is what a campus ministry should be. The foundation must be that, from the view of the church, there is no fundamental difference between an Ivy League student and anyone else. Both are sinners, dead in trespasses, and in need of Christ. Christ comes to both in the same way—through Word and Sacrament. Therefore, the center of campus ministries at the Ivy League, like any ministry, must subsist on only Word and Sacrament. However, a necessary aspect of these ministries is community. Students who have just left home are universally seeking acceptance and community at college. They are establishing independence and forming their outlooks on life. They will find a group of friends, or at least companions, somewhere, as evidenced by the multitude of student organizations. In addition, there is a desire for greater intellectual understanding of the faith.

How are these needs to be met in a campus ministry? A Christian community must be gathered around the font, pulpit, and altar, which are centered on Christ. Since Christ gives gifts through the pastoral office, there must be a pastor directly involved with the ministry. Part of the campus pastor’s job is to encourage students to live their calling to faith as brothers and sisters in mutual encouragement, doing good works prepared for them while being faithful students. The LCMS, of all Christian churches, has a great advantage regarding the intellectual aspect of campus ministry in the Ivy League. Our pastors are among the best-educated of any church, and should be able to engage in a stimulating conversation with any seriously interested student. Lutheran theology has never avoided the hard questions of the faith, and we should have no fear in the marketplace of ideas. Most importantly, all of our theology points to Christ and is founded on His Word, whose wisdom makes foolish the philosophers of this age.

Therefore, Christ has set before us a mission field of great importance both in the sense that a university/college campus is one of the spiritually darkest institutions of our time while also being strategically positioned as a hub of our culture. In the pure Word and the rightly administered Sacraments we have the greatest gifts to offer. A fellowship of students thus nurtured will be a great blessing to the campus, the church and the world.

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Campus Ministry, A Must

After serving for thirty years in congregations of all sizes, shapes and situations, I now teach at a Concordia University. It is a position from which to observe rather closely what happens to the lives and minds of university students. It is also a place to reflect on those years of service, to sift the insights, and hopefully to pass on what is valuable to a new generation. A university is an entirely appropriate place for that to happen. Properly, students don’t “enter” the university; they matriculate. The word is from Latin and comes from the word for womb. In the university are both the safety and the growth of the womb that leads to birthing. Hence the term alma mater.

In this edition of Issues we ask, “Whither ‘campus ministry’? Is there a place for it? What shape does it take?” Synodical districts ask these questions because they have to underwrite campus ministry. Smaller institutions that
have traditionally funded campus chaplains are feeling a budget crunch and are asking funding questions. These questions are also raised by congregations traditionally called “town/gown” situations, where a local parish takes on specific ministry to the students of its local campus.

University campuses sustain a consistency over the years. A colleague in our history department periodically shares stories of the medieval universities: their courses of study, the hijinks, the struggles of faculty and student alike. The stories often sound pretty contemporary. Have campuses changed? And how about communication of the Gospel in that arena? How could or should it be undertaken today?

Decades ago, when I left for a state university, the war and race riots that plagued our country were unimaginied. Vietnam only loomed on the horizon, authority was generally not questioned, ROTC was active on campus, and the most sophisticated electronics entering a dorm were turn-tables. At that time campus ministry was an extension of home. It was reassurance and consolation and encouragement. (And this gives me a chance to say an enormous public “thank you” to Rev. Rudy Rehmer for shepherding so many of us through our years at Purdue University.)

But the calendar and the culture have turned. Vietnam and Watergate fostered strong national skepticism. The economy was vastly transformed. Healthcare and transportation costs have skyrocketed. The American church has largely caved in to shallow religious consumerism. Communism’s monolith crumbled. The human genome has been mapped, terrorism was inflicted upon us, and we engaged in yet another war. Internet communication, globalization, feminism, post-modernism, changed sexual ethics, militant homosexuality, and the flood of narcotics are only some of the transformations that have brought new voices and pressures to the university setting ... and probably a good deal of fear. The questions are still there: “Whether ‘campus ministry’? Is there a place for it? What shape does it take?”

I suspect most of our country at one time assumed that colleges and universities were the source of profound insight and remarkable understanding to perplexing questions, and storehouses of answers to unlock mystery. Today faculty increasingly encounter parents who want the assurance their young people will emerge from the college experience more learned, but essentially unchanged. (It’s hard to “home school” college.)

A campus (originally a flat place of the military encampment) is the place of college (from “colleagues,” those who chose to be together) where the human conversation takes place. It is the place of questioning and shaping of attitudes, of looking at hard facts, considering opinions and convictions unexplored. It is the locale of exploration of self and world, of history and future. It is at one and the same time a safe and dangerous place. Safe because there is room and patience and guidance to explore! Dangerous because growth takes place only with risk and discomfort! The one voice that must be in that mix is the living voice of the Gospel. That is the demand of campus ministry. In a setting like ours at Concordia, the Gospel can be heard (and is continually) in all settings. It should not be less so in all institutions of higher learning. But how?

I recently talked with a campus minister working in a public setting. As I watched and listened to him, these observations characterize the miracle of his work:

- Students’ questions of intellect and life must be taken entirely seriously and cannot be dismissed with cavalier disregard and/or canned answers.
- Students will compare creeds and deeds. They need to see them match.
- Students are neither entirely cynical, nor glibly naive. They are sophisticated, and they know when they’re being manipulated.
- Students seek depth and clarity of thought; but they are not significantly impressed with mere labels and consistent doctrinal systems.
- The message must be doctrinal and engage them with honesty and compassion.

Paul did not back off from Mars Hill. How dare we consider such a possibility? Whether it is the small, private institution or the sprawling complex of our state schools, the voice of the Gospel must be present, and we need not be timid about it. This is going to cost us as a church body. It’s going to cost money. But the clear and solid communication of the Gospel in the college/university setting is one of our most important investments of energy for the future. It’s also going to cost us trust, because the path and patterns for engaging that conversation in the marketplace of ideas could well be different than most other settings for Gospel communication. Do we trust the process?

One of the greatest expressions of trust in campus ministry I ever saw was the investment in one campus chaplain who moved among several commuter campuses, engaging students in conversation wherever possible. Even though a weekly worship setting was part of his ministry, probably some of the most profound and lasting work took place as that campus chaplain was regularly in the cadaver dissection lab with medical students listening, asking, exploring questions, but always affirming the announcement of the God who creates and redeems in and through the body of a Man. It is that sort of serious conversation and conversation setting that embodies campus ministry. It must happen.

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new millennial generation

reach out to the largest number of young people

the church prepared to respond to their search for meaning

Challenges for campus ministry
What Are Challenges for campus ministry in the new millennium? Are students connecting or staying connected to Christ and His Church while they attend college? Are there ways to help young people grow in faith while in school? How receptive are people on campus to learning about the love of Christ and Christian ideals? What does this new Millennial Generation look like? Is the church prepared to respond to their search for meaning? Are we ready to reach out to the largest number of young people and most diverse generation ever to attend college in the history of our country?

These young adults have been shaped by experiences of unparalleled terror and crisis in their country in the shadows of the crumbling Twin Towers. At the same time they are quite comfortable in finding new pathways to a whole new world in cyberspace. Through an array of technology and tech gadgets, they correspond with people in places and about things they may have never experienced before via a worldwide web that reaches far beyond the local mall and borders of their community. All this is in response to what Gary McIntosh in his book, One Church, Four Generations (2002), calls "wanting to be connected." This generation doesn’t ask, “What does your father do?” Rather, they ask, "Does your dad live with you?" This can be a startling reminder that things are not as they used to be.

Today, campus ministries provide more than Bible study, worship opportunities and spiritual support. They offer opportunities and environments to build relationships through ministry events like midnight painting parties, alternative spring break, sports ministry, coffeehouse outreach, finals week food frenzy, freshman survival kits, and other creative events. These are not ordinary evangelism modes of the past. Like the words of a popular Bob Dylan song, “‘Times, they are a changin’.”

The Millennials

To understand this huge mission field on college campuses, one must also understand...
some of the formative experiences of this

...
in our nation’s colleges and universities may reach near 20 million by 2014 (NCES, 2004).

While many studies categorize and quantify the impact of the new generation of Millennials, it is still difficult to determine the full extent of its impact because many in this group are still coming of age. It is prudent to note two substantial subgroups overshadowed by the rising tide of the Millennials that should be considered when planning for campus outreach. First, there are approximately 720,000 international students enrolled in college in this country. There are an additional one million family members arriving with these international students as they attend college in the United States (International Student Ministry, Inc., 2005). Second, as the student population grows, colleges and universities will need to employ additional faculty and staff. Approximately 3.2 million people were employed in colleges and universities in 2003 (NCES, 2004). These groups often can be missed opportunities by narrowing the focus of “campus mission.”

In their book, Making God Real for A New Generation (2003), Craig Kennet Miller and Maryjane Pierce Norton suggest seven characteristics that are keys to reaching and understanding the Millennial Generation. First, their numbers are staggering. With more than 76,345,410 young people, ages four to 21 in 2003, this is the largest generation in our country. The current decade will see a 16 percent increase in the number of students on the nation’s campuses, with the number of full-time students increasing by a projected 19 percent over the same period. Ninety-one percent of Millennials in high school say they plan to attend college after they graduate (Miller & Norton, 2003, 16).

Along with more student enrollment comes an increased level of stress related to competition. The drive to excel begins at a very young age. Children are encouraged to start early in any number of extra-curricular pursuits, ranging from soccer and martial arts for toddlers to advanced traveling teams, competitive performances, and clubs for teens outside those offered at school. This competition will only increase with limited funds and space for college students. In
addition to the added stress of competition to enter desired schools and maintain status, there is a new expanding gender gap. Before 1979, the majority of college students were men. Since 1979, women have been the majority, with men making up only 44 percent of the student population in 2000 (Miller & Norton, 2003, 18).

Another key to understanding this generation is the importance of experience. One cannot talk about Millennials without talking about the “experiential world view.” For this generation, experience is the basis of truth. One cannot fully appreciate truth unless there is an experience to go along with it. What one thinks about something is not nearly as important as how it makes one feel. This quest for experiential learning helps a generation that interacts with many more cultures than the preceding generations. Millennials make up the most diverse generation in the history of the United States. Increased immigration and an increasingly multicultural society foster this distinction. As mentioned earlier, this generation has seen the first attack on the continental United States. It has experienced increased high school violence, other terrorist attacks and foreign wars. This factor into a realization that any day could be their last.

The vivid reality of mortality makes relationships even more precious to this generation. Relationships are the key. Alicia Mosier offered these remarks in Millennials Floating (2001): “Millennials are the most coddled, most moneyed, most respectful, most morally traditional, most conformist, most team oriented, most ambitious, most optimistic, and all around sweetest group of young people to come along in a very long while.” There are studies and researchers suggesting that this Millennial Generation is the next great generation, reflecting characteristics similar to the upbringing and ideals of the G. I. Generation, who fought in World War II. Millennials may be considered to be a modern Band of Brothers.

**Mission Potential**

So how do these Millennial characteristics impact the mission field and outreach potential on college campuses? Two ground-breaking studies have emerged to shed light on the spirituality of college students. The first study was conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) at UCLA. The National Study of College Students’ Search for Meaning and Purpose: The Spiritual Life of College Students. The second study, OMG! How Generation Y Is Redefining Faith in the iPod Era, was sponsored by the independent organization Reboot. These studies highlight valuable information about the Millennials, such as “… young Americans are actively engaged in spiritual questions, two new surveys indicate, even if they may not be exploring them in traditional ways. One of the surveys based on more than 100,000 freshmen who started college last fall found four in five reporting an interest in spirituality, with three of four searching for meaning or purpose in life, and the same proportion discussing the meaning of life with friends” (AP, 2005). Another report concluded that “Today’s college students have very high levels of spiritual interest and involvement. Many are actively engaged in a spiritual quest and are exploring the meaning and purpose of life. They also display high levels of religious commitment and involvement” (HERI, 2005, 3).

The HERI project is a multi-year project surveying more than 100,000 first-year students across the nation at 236 schools in 2004. The project team will conduct follow-up surveys with this class in 2007 (HERI, 2005). The first phase findings indicated a revitalized spirituality on campus. The study revealed that today’s college students have very high levels of spiritual involvement, are actively engaged in a spiritual quest, and are exploring the meaning of life. Another finding is that there is a direct correlation between spiritual and religious beliefs and students’ physical and physiological health.

Today's entering college students report high levels of spiritual interest and involvement. Nearly half reported that they consider it essential or very important to seek opportunities to grow spiritually. The entering freshmen show high degrees of involvement in religious activities. Over half of the students with a strong spiritual orientation are frequently able to find meaning during difficult times (HERI, 2005, 14). In other
words, spiritually inclined students will have a greater capacity to discover meaning and peace of mind even under difficult circumstances. The research also shows that religious commitment and engagement [a.k.a. connecting with a church and participating in the life of the community] promote a pattern of mental, emotional and physical health.

The study conducted by Reboot acknowledges that this generation is by far the most intertwined generation ever. Respect for differences and diversity is a core value, suggesting that students are more open minded to hearing Christian truth, especially because it offers purpose and meaning to life. "The good news is that the survey paints a composite picture of a generation who are seekers more than they are drifters—a world away from their portrayal as stereotypical automatons we so often imagine as receiving their values directly from Paris Hilton or Justin Timberlake’s PR spokesperson. They are actively considering questions of identity, community, and meaning—negotiating how important their religious identities will ultimately be—but doing so with their own friends, in their own homes, and in their own ways" (Reboot, 2005). The research team was fascinated by the majority who indicated a hunger for episodic religious experiences, preferring the informal and expressive to the ritualistic and institutional.

This generation presents a remarkable opportunity for religious denominations, organizations, and projects to contemplate. "The demand for ritual, learning, value, and spirituality is there. Whether this turns out to be a time of loss or a time of creative reinvention may ultimately be decided by the energies we place in providing innovative messengers, messages, and mechanisms that offer meaning and community on Generation Y’s terms" (Reboot, 2005, 4). The study further indicates that "religion remains a core component of young people’s lives." In addition, religious youth approach life more connected to family and community, have higher self-esteem, and hold more traditional roles of family, sex and marriage. There is a strong relationship between religiosity and volunteer activity.
Volunteer activity is on the rise throughout this country and among college students. Servant events have been filled to overflowing in past LCMS National Youth Gatherings. According to the LCMS District and Congregational Service Web page, "Tens of thousands have participated in LCMS Servant Events. Greg is a director of Christian education and has been the servant event project coordinator for Fixin' Up the Thumb held in Michigan for the past ten years. Greg notes, 'Taking youth to a Servant Event can be powerful. Hosting a project brings God to your front door. The number one reason our congregation sponsors the Fixin' Up the Thumb servant event is because of the spiritual growth that occurs in high school students. In my ministry, I'm not here to be a YMCA. I can't compete with MTV. Yet, the youth continue to come because they are getting something they can't get out there. We're providing a place for the faith to be engaged. I haven't found anything that encourages spiritual growth like a servant event'" (www.lcms.org/ca/dcs/SERVEvents/supportSE.asp, 2005).

Teens seem to be taking their service attitude to college. A 20-year trend of increasing involvement in service continues as formal academic and co-curricular service learning programs have blossomed on thousands of college campuses throughout the country. 

"As a result a multitude of young adults are discovering a passion for service and justice work. The awareness that each year, millions of college students attain moments of great clarity through service learning programs gives me tremendous hope that a generation of young people will be able to more fully address the intractable social and environmental challenges of our era" (Koth, 2005). By offering service learning experiences which include critical reflection and spiritual exploration, university and college ministries can help students develop a lifetime commitment to service. Here is where the church and university can serve as partners in ministry.

Leadership Roles

Some of the ways students are connecting to Christ and the church through campus ministry beyond service work is through leadership roles in the many campus
ministries that dot the nation’s universities and colleges. Breakaway Ministries is one of the nation’s largest non-denominational campus ministries. It is a weekly Bible study with a mission to give students an opportunity to meet Jesus Christ and grow in a relationship with Him. This is accomplished through praise and worship, hearing God’s Word, and Christian fellowship. While not affiliated with any one denomination, this organization encourages students’ involvement in local Bible-believing churches and seeks to cooperate with these churches in ministry (www.breakawayministries.org). This ministry lists all local, Bible-believing churches on its Web site and identifies more than 100 students who assist with this ministry by helping reach out to more than 4,000 students each week in study and praise.

Other ministries are doing similar things on varying scales. Carrie A. Moore of the Deseret Morning News (2005) tells of a campus ministry organizing Web-page profiles for ministry members to connect with others in ministry. A student was quoted as saying, “Last year I was a peer minister and grew so much in my faith …. Now it’s a main support group for me, my home-away-from home. It feels like family with the parishioners here.” Other ministries connect new students to congregation families through student adoption programs intentionally encouraging a relationship with families of the community. Some students take on roles as peer ministers or other leadership positions helping support fellow students and facilitating ministry with peers. Many forms of small group ministries are gaining ground as students gather for smaller groups of support and learning while developing leadership skills.

Connecting

In her article, Anguish and Assurance on Campus (2005), Kim Krull pinpoints the impact campus ministry can have in connecting students to Christ through communities such as Lutheran campus ministries. She highlights the importance of ministry connections which provide support, healing and leadership development for students. These relationships are among the greatest opportunities campus ministry has with students engaged in a quest for meaning in life. Campus ministries provide a place to be in supportive relationships that are accepting, bring growth and healing, and provide opportunity to receive validation by putting current skills to work while developing new ones.

Universities are beginning to take notice of the significance of spiritual connections. Although this may not be anything new to students who rely on their faith to manage the daily life on campus, the academy is taking note and making some changes. The Journal of College Character (2004) featured an article listing recommendations for student affairs practitioners to support students’ spiritual growth. The authors urge university leaders to recommit themselves to spirituality and faith development as important aspects of their mission to promote students’ holistic development. Student affairs organizations need to address advocating a place for spirituality in the mission and culture of higher education; providing space on campus for spiritual development and practice; publicizing, especially to new students, the spiritual resources and activities of the campus, including religious organizations and student groups; and strengthening collaboration with campus ministers and local clergy to support student opportunities for college activities (Chickering, Dalton & Stamm, 2004). Dr. Elizabeth J. Tisdell has written an entire book dedicated to this new development, Exploring Spirituality and Culture in Higher Education. More national conferences are including dimensions of student values, spirituality on campus, and holistic approaches to education. This trend will further encourage administrators and college faculty to seek out spiritual resources, opening more doors for outreach in this mission field. Although this trend will embrace all avenues considered to be spiritual, it is certain to create new opportunities to share the Good News in an environment which, until recently, often has labeled faith talk as taboo or even has reacted in hostility to the Christian faith.

The significance of today’s campuses as a huge mission field is reflected in this observation: “As a group, Millennials are unlike any other youth generation in living
memory. They are more numerous, more affluent, better educated, and more ethnically diverse. More importantly, they are beginning to manifest a wide array of positive social habits that older Americans no longer associate with youth, including a new focus on teamwork, achievement, modesty and good conduct. Only a few years from now, this can-do youth revolution will overwhelm the cynics and pessimists. Over the next decade, the Millennial Generation will entirely recast the image of youth from downbeat and alienated to upbeat and engaged—with potentially seismic consequences for America” (Howe and Strauss, 2000, 4).

Some may think that it’s a strange new world out there. Yes, the culture is changing. But many think that many changes seen in this generation are for the better. As God calls us into relationship with Him, He also compels us to be in relationship with others as we share the Good News of the Gospel. We are called to reach out to this “strange new world.” God proclaims the message of hope and new life through His ambassadors, “... as if Christ were making His appeal through us ...” (2 Corinthians 5:20). The Millennials are here and offer a giant opportunity for ministry. The Millennials are ready. The university seems to be ready. The question is “Are we ready?”

References
Who Will Support Campus Ministries?

"IF YOU WANT TO STAY IN CAMPUS MINISTRY, your future is in Madison, not Milwaukee."

With those words, I heard the Rev. Dr. Ronald E. Meyer, President of South Wisconsin District (swd), tell me what I did not want to hear: swd did not have enough financial resources to continue its full-time campus mission ministry to the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where I served as campus pastor. As a result, I accepted the call I had received to Calvary Lutheran Chapel, the lcms campus ministry serving the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

swd did close its full-time ministry to uw-Milwaukee. The chapel, located across the street from the student union, is for sale, and the 27,000-student university is now served part-time by a traditional lcms congregation that is about one mile from campus.

Meyer’s comment did not stem from a lack of interest in campus missions. To the contrary, he and swd were and continue to be among The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod’s strongest supporters of campus ministry.

Changes in District Support

In 2005, swd gave $323,000 in direct support to its five campus ministries serving public universities and an additional $67,000 to help students attending Synod’s ten colleges and universities. These figures do not include the District’s indirect support of insurance, capital improvements, in-kind services, etc.

“This is in light of swd taking a ten percent drop in congregation pledges in 2005 from 2004,” said William Hoeg, swd executive assistant to the president and business manager.

In 2005, swd received about $370,000 less than it did the previous year, according to the Rev. Daniel McMiller, swd missions executive.

“There is a lot of hardship in many of our parishes,” said McMiller. “They are down in size and down in offerings.”

Hoeg said that the District’s “buying power” is further reduced because congregational giving to the District hasn’t risen for 30 years. When inflation is taken into account, each dollar given in 1975 is worth less than 50 cents today, he said. "Needless to say, given our
support received there will be changes in the support that we can provide,” said Hoeg. The SWD is not alone.

Impact on Campus Ministries
In 2003, the Texas District eliminated program funding for all of its campus ministries except those serving the University of Texas, Austin, and Texas A&M University, College Station. Both must become self-supporting by 2010.

“The students and I have to spend more time raising money and less time doing ministry on campus,” said Paul Hoemann, LCMS campus pastor serving Texas A&M. “Also, we are cutting our International Student Ministry director position from full-time to part-time.”

“The Michigan District is experiencing declining income, and we are impacted,” said Dave Winningham, LCMS campus pastor serving the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Winningham said his District is considering various options, including possibly combining the campus ministry with another ministry or with Concordia University, Ann Arbor. “I am also looking at other options,” said Winningham, “either becoming a fundraiser—which I am not, but necessity is the mother of invention—or developing an independent congregation.”

Even campus ministries that have not yet been affected recognize that long-term District funding is not guaranteed. “We have a wonderful relationship with the District,” said W. Max Mons, LCMS campus pastor serving the University of Iowa, Iowa City. “They support us and we support them.” Iowa District East provides Mons’ salary and benefits, plus half of the campus ministry’s $100,000 budget. It is also responsible for all of the chapel’s major maintenance and repairs. “But what happens if financial times and District leadership change and it is decided that campus ministry is not as important?” Mons asked.

New Directions
St. Paul’s Lutheran Chapel and Student Center, where Mons serves, recently received a Charitable Gifting Initiative grant from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans to begin an endowment campaign coordinated by a new part-time development director. “We hope to get to the point where, if the District snipped the umbilical cord, we would be fine,” said Mons. St. Paul’s campaign has generated $43,000 in donations so far.

Calvary Lutheran Chapel in Madison, Wisconsin, and Martin Luther Chapel in East Lansing, Michigan, also have received Charitable Gifting Initiative grants from Thrivent Financial to start intentional campus ministry fundraising campaigns.

With or without paid development staff, many other LCMS campus ministries are also becoming more intentional about raising the funds needed to do the Lord’s work. This often begins with seeking additional support from the participants who are currently being blessed by campus ministries, along with their closest relatives, such as parents and spouses. It continues with appeals to the ministries’ alumni who have fond memories of the blessings they received back when they did not have much money to put into the offering plate.

“I have donated every time my former campus ministry has asked me to do so, and I would be willing to write more and bigger checks if only they would ask,” said one LCMS campus ministry alumnus who requested to remain anonymous because “I want every campus ministry to think that I am one of their alums.”

Other common sources of revenue include area congregations and church groups, such as Lutheran Women’s Missionary League societies. At campuses where parking is hard to find, some campus ministries generate revenue by renting church parking spaces to students during the week. Many campus ministries are taking advantage of Thrivent Financial’s GivingPlus program, which supplements some donations made to qualifying organizations. New LCMS campus ministries and dormant ones that wish to revive are eligible to apply for grants from the Lutheran Campus Mission Association (LCMA), a mission society in partnership with LCMS World Mission.

Some campus ministries are developing more creative ways to generate funding. For example, the Lutheran Student Center in Lubbock, Texas, located across the street from
Texas Tech University, opened Martin’s Coffee Haus, a commercial business that sells coffee and cappuccino and provides other services such as free wireless Internet access. "We are hoping to see over $20,000 profit by the second year of operation," said Bruce Wurdeman, the Texas District mission and ministry facilitator who assists the Lubbock campus ministry. "But the main reason we opened it is to get more traffic through the student center. It is a mission first; the money is secondary."

Meijer, a grocery supercenter chain in Michigan and other Midwest states, offers its customers an opportunity to allocate one percent of the money they spend there to area charities. Martin Luther Chapel, which serves Michigan State University in East Lansing, is one of the registered charities, and 82 Meijer customers have listed the chapel as their recipient. As a result, the campus ministry receives more than $100 per month from Meijer. "More important," said David Dressel, the chapel's campus pastor, "is the fact that, when these people check out, they think of Martin Luther Chapel."

What’s Important

The Lubbock coffee house and the East Lansing superstore’s donation program help show that the primary focus of fundraising is not funding. "Ministry and personal relationships are more important than money," said Dr. Phyllis Castens Wiederhoeft, executive director of the Association of Lutheran Development Executives. "If they are emphasized and communicated well, then funding can follow."

To promote the campus ministry at Texas A&M, Hoemann asks himself, "How can I best communicate to people what God is doing here, and how they can become a part of it?" He encourages other campus ministry workers to ask themselves the same question.

"I try to have at least one article about the campus ministry in Iowa City in every issue of IDE Today," said Mons when discussing the bimonthly publication that is delivered free of charge to all congregations in Iowa District East.

Partnerships with area congregations is a key element to effective campus ministries, according to Carl Selle, LCMS campus pastor serving the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. "We are not islands, but centers with octopus-like arms reaching for prayers, relationships, financial and other support," Selle said. "It is a two-way street. I believe that campus ministries are being 'dropped' because they have not worked the partnerships available."

Hoemann said that prayer, not funding, is the most important thing a campus ministry can receive from its partners. "Second, congregations can send us the names and
contact information of their current and prospective college students,” Hoemann said, 
so that we can begin to make meaningful contacts with those students.”

Reduced funding from districts may be discouraging at best and traumatic at worst. But it also helps campus ministries, along with their partner congregations and other supporters, take more responsibility for the ministry, and that is a very good thing, according to Wurdeman. “There is much more local involvement,” he said.

Reduced funding also opens doors for campus missionaries and the ministries they serve to be more entrepreneurial, said the Rev. Mike Ruhl, executive director of the Center for U.S. Missions in Irvine, California, and a former Michigan District missions executive. “There is no greater, more fertile, and more accessible mission field anywhere,” Ruhl added. “But many campus ministries have suffered from a lack of vision, mission and goals.”

**Strategic Planning**

Entrepreneurial training is happening now, thanks to the Campus Missionary Institute. The Campus Missionary Institute is LCMA’s one-week learning opportunity to help LCMS workers and the ministries they serve to develop a strategic plan for outreach on a nearby college or university campus. The next Campus Missionary Institute will be July 7-13, 2006, at Concordia University, Seward, Nebraska. More information is available online at www.lcma.info.

Campus ministries deserve more enthusiastic and meaningful support because the church’s future will be affected by it, according to Hoemann. “The people sitting in my pews today are tomorrow’s leaders in your congregation,” Hoemann said regarding the Texas A&M students he serves. He also said that college is “a time of life when people are most open to the Gospel” and, as such, “university communities are tremendous mission fields.”

“What an opportunity we have to reach them with the Gospel now,” said Hoemann. “However, if we are shutting down our campus ministries, or severely cutting them back, because ‘they cost too much,’ then shame on us. We are missing out big time on an opportunity that God has placed right in our laps.”

“Campus mission fields are one of the most strategic fields in the United States,” said the Rev. Dr. Robert Scudieri, LCMS World Mission Associate Executive Director for National Missions. “It is on the modern day university and college campuses that the best and brightest from the United States and from around the world are located. Influences here are ones that will continue for years to come.”
There Are Many Different Models of ministry for sharing the Good News of Christ’s saving love among the students, faculty and staff of our nation’s colleges and universities. As a matter of fact, in The Ivy Jungle Network Report, The State of College and University Ministry—November 2003, the multiplicity of approaches and settings for campus ministry was cited as one of the challenges in putting together a current assessment of campus ministry in the United States (The Ivy Jungle Network Report, 2).

Within the LCMS, the following terms have been commonly used to denote some of the different approaches in conducting campus ministry: student assembly ministry, town and gown congregation, all university congregation, and contact ministry. We might consider these to be some of the primary established models of LCMS campus ministry. However, these are very broad classifications, and individual local ministries often use their own terminology to describe their “model” of campus ministry.

The Search for New Models: One Size Doesn’t Fit All

Conducting a Google search of “campus ministry models” will produce hours of fascinating reading. Across denominations and parachurch organizations, there are seemingly countless models of campus ministry, with many claiming to be the next big thing—or at least worth a second look. Names of some popular campus ministry models include: befriender model, house church model, church-based model, partners model, small group model, cell church model … presence model, networking model, church-on-campus model (Brittain, 673) … and the list goes on. Reading the descriptions of specific campus ministries indicates that elements of more than one model are often blended or adapted to meet unique local needs and outreach opportunities. In other words: One size doesn’t fit all!

A presentation by Tim Kruse of St. Paul’s University Catholic Center in Madison, Wisconsin, helps illustrate this point. Speaking
at a symposium at the University of Notre Dame in 2004, Kruse presented five different examples of Catholic campus ministries that are considered to be exemplary in terms of evangelizing the unchurched. One ministry is modeled around small group discipleship. Another ministry is staff-driven and utilizes peer ministers to teach the faith to other students. In one of the “exemplary” Catholic ministries, a monastic brotherhood at a large campus parish runs an outreach ministry focused on hospitality and fellowship events. Two of the ministries Kruse identified work in partnerships with different national parachurch organizations, drawing upon the strengths of both groups: Catholic denominational identity and the parachurch evangelism expertise. Each of the “exemplary” Catholic campus ministries developed a custom-tailed model that best mated the ministry resources and mission opportunities of their specific location. That is to say, the “top five” evangelistic ministries weren’t all doing the exact same things in order to successfully reach the unchurched.

As we consider a search for new models of campus mission work within the LCMS, the necessity for local ministries to be custom-tailed also holds true. There isn’t any one “successful” blueprint that can be utilized in a cookie-cutter fashion throughout the church with the same results. Each campus is different. Each district is different. Each campus ministry will have a different set of resources available upon which to draw. As we consider new “models” of campus ministry, it will be helpful to look at some historical aspects of LCMS campus work, as well as some common factors influencing the development of new models today.

Factors Shaping Models of Campus Ministry in the LCMS: Some History

September of 2006 will mark the 86th year of campus ministry in The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. Initially, campus ministry was as a measure of “conservation,” intended to preserve the spiritual life of an estimated 6,000 Lutheran students attending non-synodical schools in the 1920s and 30s. Over time, both the number of students and the number of campus ministries began to grow significantly. Following WWII almost 50,000 Lutheran students were attending public colleges and universities. In order to minister to an ever-growing student population, individual LCMS districts established and administered Word and Sacrament ministries in public university communities. At schools with a significant Lutheran population, university chapels and student centers were strategically erected near campus (many of these were student assembly ministries and all-university congregations). In some locations town and gown congregations were established to serve both students and the broader community. When those options weren’t available, nearby pastors and congregations were called upon to serve as contact ministries. A student organization, Gamma Delta, operated under the Walther League from 1932–1969 (LCMS World Mission Harvest Newsletter, 1).

In the early days, it might be said that LCMS campus ministries were primarily chaplaincy ministries designed to provide spiritual care to the thousands of Lutheran students already on campus. Over time, however, college and university campuses began to be recognized for their mission potential. In 1965, in convention, the LCMS placed campus ministry under its Board for Mission Services. While campus ministry continued to provide spiritual care and a worshipping community for Lutheran students, it also began to develop strategies for reaching out to non-Christians (Harvest Newsletter, 1). In the 1960s and 70s, some districts entered into cooperative ministries with the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America (predecessor bodies to the current Evangelical Lutheran Church in America). During this same period a pan-Lutheran student organization, Lutheran Student Movement, replaced Gamma Delta. By the late 1980s, however, theological differences were challenging the continuation of most cooperative Lutheran work. In 1988 the LCMS formed its own student organization, Lutheran Student Fellowship (Harvest Newsletter, 1).

By the middle 1990s, a strategy statement had been adopted for LCMS campus ministry which said: “Districts are being encouraged to see their campus ministries as missionary
outposts, and those serving in campus ministry are asked to see themselves as missionaries” (Siering, 4). This is a significant shift from the days when campus ministries were primarily understood to be chaplaincies.

“Old” Models Are Challenged

The shift from a focus of “conserving” Lutheran students to one which views campus ministry as a missionary endeavor is not the sole motivator for searching for new ways to continue and expand campus ministry. Some other realities have forced districts, congregations and local campus ministry boards to re-design their campus ministries.

As the 20th century came to a close, funding and staffing full-time ministries became a greater challenge for the districts and congregations involved in campus ministry. Maintaining district-owned buildings (that were now often 30-40 years old) was not always desirable for districts nor something local campus ministry boards had prepared to consider on their own. The districts that had pursued pan-Lutheran ministries began the painful process of exiting those ministries as the era of cooperative Lutheran campus ministries began to end. In almost every district the issues of funding and staffing have been factors influencing the re-shaping of how Christ’s mission on campus is carried out within the LCMS.

Yet, campus mission opportunities continue to grow.

The Growing Campus Mission Field Calls for New Models

Recognizing the campus as a mission field and campus ministry as a missionary endeavor necessitates some knowledge of what that mission field looks like. Who are the people on our campuses? What are they like? How many are unreached? How can the church best communicate the Gospel with them?

Today, according to statistics presented on the LCMS World Mission Web site, there are over 16 million college students on 3,700 campuses in the United States. Of those, approximately nine million are between the ages of 19 and 25. It is precisely at this age that young people are shaping their life-views and
desperately need the guidance of God’s Word and to be connected with Christian peers and adult role models. Many in campus ministry estimate that between 70 and 80 percent of the students on U. S. campuses are unchurched. When the international student population is added to that figure, the non-Christian population on campus becomes greater than the number of non-Christians in the average U. S. community (Inter-Connections, 3).

Research reported by George Barna in September of 2003 suggests that only three out of 10 young people (in their 20s) attend church in a typical week. This includes not only those young people who have never been connected with the church, but those who have grown up in active Christian homes as well. The Barna study points out that "millions of twentysomething Americans—many of whom were active in churches during their teens—pass through their most formative adult decade while putting Christianity on the backburner" (The Barna Update, 1). In the same report David Kinnamon, a twentysomething Barna researcher, reacts to the study’s findings:

Christianity is not going to whither away among twentysomethings—more than 10 million are active church-goers and very committed to the Christian faith. But the real issue is how churches will respond to the faithquakes that are reverberating through our nation’s young adults. The notion that these people will return to the church when they get older or once they become parents is only true in a minority of cases. More importantly, that reasoning ignores the real issue: millions of twentysomethings are crystallizing their views of life without the input of church leaders, the Bible, or other mature Christians. If we simply wait for them to come back to church later in adulthood, not only will most of those people never return, but also we would miss the chance to alter their life trajectory during a critical phase. And, besides, what church couldn’t use the infusion of energy, ideas, and leadership that young adults can bring to the table? (The Barna Update, 3).

While Barna’s report might seem startling, it serves as a reminder of our church’s call to be in mission on campus. Within reports like Barna’s there are also some telling clues as to what factors should be influencing how we approach reaching college students with the Gospel. For example, many of the young people surveyed in the Barna study reported a desire to be trusted with leadership roles within their churches. Mentoring was pointed out to be the most appealing form of leadership development for young adults. Some campus ministries are picking up on this finding and encouraging mentoring relationships to be a part of their peer ministry programs or in the training of their small group Bible study leaders.

Another open door for new campus mission work is that of ministry to international students and scholars and their families. On our campuses in the United States there are currently 720,000 international students and scholars, along with many of their dependents (Selle, 25). Many of these international guests have never had the opportunity to learn of God’s love for them. They’ve never experienced true forgiveness. They’ve never been introduced to Jesus, the Savior. While they are here in our midst we have the opportunity to show them God’s love and teach them about Christ.

International students are a specific segment of the campus population that has received growing attention in the LCMS over the past ten years. Existing campus ministries, districts, and various ministry coalitions have been developing intentional outreach ministries among internationals. Today, intentional international student ministries utilize English conversation groups, cooking classes, small group Bible studies, hospitality events and various other friendship ministries to share the message of Jesus Christ as Savior for all people. Most often, international student ministries employ part-time directors and rely heavily on volunteers from local congregations.

A third mission opportunity calling for the development of new models of campus work is among those attending our nation’s junior colleges and community colleges. The American Council on Education, in a June 2004 press release, reported that community college enrollment grew by 14 percent during
the 1990s, five percentage points more than all the rest of higher education. This is a new segment of campus mission opportunity that we have little experience with as a church. How do we minister to students who are only with us for such a short time (two years)? How do we connect with students who are more likely to be living at home and/or are required to hold a part-time job while in school? What about community colleges that are becoming more residential? Because community and junior college students are likely to transfer to a four-year college to finish their degrees, there is also a shorter period of connection with our traditional campus ministries. How will the church respond to these new and expanded opportunities for mission on campus?

Whether in a traditional four-year setting, with international students, or on a community college campus, having the ability to develop authentic relationships with students is vital in sharing the Gospel. A creative thinking and dedicated people who are willing to be a part of those relationships will be equally important.

New Models of Campus Mission: One District’s Shift

At the beginning of our current decade the Missouri District of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod endeavored to develop a new model for its campus mission work. Facing challenges of funding and staffing, the Missouri District Mission Board was forced to take a serious look at how it encouraged and conducted campus missions. With district-owned properties at five campuses and staffed ministries at nine sites, combined with stretched district finances, it was evident that changes would be required. Calling a campus pastor to serve each individual site was not possible. Splitting a pastor’s role, part-time campus and part-time congregational ministry, also had drawbacks—both for the pastor and those being served. Yet, amidst these challenges was also the realization that mission opportunities on Missouri’s campus were actually growing. A rethinking and retooling of campus mission work for the 21st century was about to begin.

A Campus Ministry Action Team was formed, and a "Campus Missionary" model of ministry began to develop. The concept for the Missouri model borrowed from a model already being explored in Kansas. The initial plan called for the district to be divided into two regions, eastern and western. A campus missionary would be called to oversee and facilitate campus mission work in each region. The missionaries would serve as guides to local campus ministry coordinators, non-ordained, part-time workers responsible for leading each of the campus ministries. Other key participants in this model include the students themselves (who receive leadership training for ministry), as well as the local congregations in the campus communities.

Not only does this model provide a more realistic way to navigate some of the financial stresses of the old system, but it also offers some potential benefits. First of all, it is an equipping ministry. Church professionals facilitate and equip God’s people for ministry. The campus missionary and campus ministry coordinators listen to, train and guide students in reaching out to their friends and peers in a Christ-centered way. District-coordinated Peer Ministry Training Modules provide student leaders with an ongoing opportunity, throughout all four years of college, to grow in their study of God’s Word and in sharing their faith.

Ronnie Merritt, who was one of the first campus missionaries to pioneer this model in Missouri, now serves as the chair of the Campus Ministry Action Team. According to Merritt, the new model “allows the campus centers to truly better meet the students’ needs … The key word in this ministry in my opinion and based upon Scriptural support is ‘equipping.’ Young persons empowered by the Holy Spirit ‘doing’ ministry that God has called them to do in a campus setting is what campus centers are all about. The church professionals facilitate and equip God’s people for ministry much like the Apostle Paul did in the early church (Merritt, 1).”

Another positive aspect of Missouri’s new approach to campus mission work is that it encourages local congregations to join hands with the students living in their
universities has been important within The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod ever since campus ministry work officially began at the University of Wisconsin almost 86 years ago. The original models of ministry on campus were born out of the desire to minister to students, combined with a committed effort to utilize available resources effectively within the campus setting. The most important detail was that the church followed through in pursuing its campus ministry goals.

Today is a moment in time when the campus mission field is calling for new and revitalized models of ministry. The search for those new models is in its infancy, and is being encouraged at a national level through the Lutheran Campus Mission Association (LCMA), a mission society in partnership with LCMS World Mission.

According to its mission statement, LCMA is committed to providing "creative leadership to enable and empower campus ministers and the broader church to be effective witnesses of Christ in the academic community and the world." As a partner in the Ablaze! movement, LCMA has adopted the following strategic objectives:

- Ignite an energized, Spirit-led, mission-focused, self-generating movement among students, as well as faculty and staff, to share Christ with 4.5 million people by 2017.
- Build a broader base of partners with a vision for campus missions.
- Increase opportunities and capabilities of partners.
- Enable, equip and link resources to campus missions partners.
- Facilitate a culture, attitude and spirit of courageous entrepreneurial leadership for the development of campus mission.
- Support the Board for World Mission's vision for campus mission work and campus mission partners (LCMA, 5).

A catalyst for campus missions (missionary), the Rev. Greg Fairow, has been called by LCMS World Mission to help districts, congregations and other appropriate entities within the church establish new campus ministries and revitalize existing ones. LCMA provides resources like the annual Campus Mission Community.
Confabulation, which is designed to encourage and equip campus workers, lay volunteers, and college students alike as they gather for learning, fellowship and celebration. Another LCMA-sponsored resource is the Campus Missionary Institute, which exists for current campus workers who wish to be renewed in their vision for campus mission ministry, to develop a strategic plan for an existing campus mission ministry, or to develop a vision and strategic plan to start a new or to revive a dormant campus mission ministry.

There isn’t a “one size fits all answer” as to how a missionary campus ministry is to be formulated. There is, however, our Lord’s command to “Go and make disciples of all nations” by baptizing and teaching. We also have His promise to be with us as we respond to His directive: “And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:19-20). As our Lord is faithful to His Word and we are faithful to Him, new models of campus mission will emerge from congregations, districts and coalitions recognizing the need and opportunity to reach out to those on campus with the love of Christ.

Notes

1Definitions of terms used in the Lutheran Campus Mission Association Balanced Focus Plan: Partners: congregations, ministries, districts, executives and other entities who collaborate with LCMA to share the Christ with 4.5 million people by 2017, the 500th anniversary of the Reformation. Partners shall share LCMA vision and goals. Mission responders: people who respond to the Gospel by involvement in God’s mission by learning, praying, giving, telling, going, sending and celebrating. LCMA people: LCMA Board and staff, International Student Ministry representative, Lutheran Student Fellowship representative. Leadership: LCMA Board. Board: Board for World Mission, LCMS.

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**Servant for Jesus’ Sake**

**Theophil Janzow**

Lima, Ohio: Fairway Press, 2005

Do you believe that the Lord works in strange, even miraculous ways, in order to lay out our paths and the working of His Church on earth? I certainly do. And so does Dr. Ted Janzow, who backs up this belief with a nearly unbelievable story of one congregation’s call meeting in which one member stood up and nominated a young man who had preached there once as a seminarian. The only problem was that he truthfully could not remember that young man’s name. Shockingly, the congregation supported that nomination! Amazingly, they managed to figure out who that young man was! Astonishingly, they called young Pastor T. Janzow! Wondrously, he accepted their Call!

Do you believe that there are times in congregational living when our own stubborn ways and worldly mindsets are almost laughably opposed to the ways of God? I certainly do. And so does Dr. Ted Janzow, who backs up this belief with a poignant (but also hilarious) story of a congregation (many decades ago, thankfully) whose members could finally no longer, in good conscience, be served by their pastor, because his wife couldn’t speak German (and whose very salvation was, by their definition, quite unlikely).

Do you believe that so much of ministry success occurs when leaders are surrounded and supported by tremendously willing and able co-workers? I certainly do. And so does Dr. Ted Janzow, who tells not only of his important and fruitful years at Concordia University, Nebraska, but also of the challenging yet satisfying beginning of Concordia Lutheran Seminary in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

With these and other great stories, one man’s life is told, with full acknowledgement that it was woven by God Himself. A great man of God, in true humility, speaks eloquently of the value and the joy of a godly wife and children. This gifted and gracious servant of Jesus gladly bears full witness that mission work and reaching the lost is accomplished by the Holy Spirit in even the unlikeliest of places—a Christian college in a small town setting. We are even granted a child’s glimpse into life in a parsonage.

As a major theme of every one of his stories and recollections, this "servant for Jesus’ sake" gives full glory to the One who loves Him, and loves us all. That is as much a part of his legacy as the stories themselves. Those stories are worthy of being read and re-read.

This is Church history at its best. The stories are rich. They flow nicely. They speak of personal faith, of trust, of hope, of love, of God’s faithfulness.

The reader will delight in these stories of a great and humble man of God. And, perhaps, the reader will understand (even act upon) the truth that every believer has stories to tell; stories in which the Lord’s precious ways are revealed, and His Name praised. And it could be, that when everything else is said and done, this is among the noblest and highest results of knowing, reading and embracing Church history.

**The Rev. L. R. Schnake**

Director of Ministries
Christ Lutheran Church
Lincoln, Nebraska

**Regarding the Cross**

**William Wolfram**

Norfolk, Nebraska: Marathon Press, 2005

If this book were considerably larger and much heavier it would be a "coffee table book.” It is primarily a visual feast. The author uses a computer to construct numerous fascinating cross forms from repeated photographic fragments in a way that recalls kaleidoscope designs. Text, though not unimportant, is secondary. That can rarely if ever be said about a basically theological work.

The author’s theological stance is solidly Lutheran, clearly emphasizing Jesus, grace, sin and salvation. Within its modest dimensions the book contains a wealth of thought about the meaning of the cross. The symbolic content of the Greek cross form and the square is made clear. Occasionally the reader may have questions about the text. Was not Adam, as well as Eve, guilty of unbelief in the Garden? Are discussions of "theistic evolution" absolutely incompatible with God’s grace for sinners?

Unlike contradiction, “good” ambiguity presumes some inherent harmony, if not immediately or clearly understood. The ambiguity of the cross is, perhaps, at the heart of this book. Wolfram is careful to note that the photographs are not of “jewels or polished metals.” Yet each image in the book is a highly crafted visual gem. Calvary’s cross was literally an object of horrific torture and repugnance, but eyes that are refocused at the time of one’s baptism into Christ’s death see the cross as beautiful. This provides a rationale for the seductive graphic beauty of this book about the cross. The images (not really illustrations), book design, typeface choice, and printing are impeccable. Not that the images are superficially pretty—colors other than browns and grays come as a surprise. In the spirit of the ‘resurrection crosses,’ might the artist in another series use photographs of brightly colored or organic subjects?

Another ambiguity involves Wolfram’s view that a corpus (dead body) on a cross is inappropriate because it suggests that the redeeming crucifixion was never completely overcome by Christ’s resurrection. Yet many of his carefully chosen Bible texts make clear that we remember the suffering and death of the Son of God as redemptive—not the cross itself. Perhaps this arguable point is resolved by metaphors that the author may not fully (or consciously) acknowledge.

What should one make of the fact that the source material for most of the “perfect” Greek crosses involves ordinary things that are worn, old, ignored, discarded, rejected? Two things come to mind. First, Christ was not seen as being physically attractive, and he suffered rejection. Thus the physical stuff of the photos metaphorically becomes the body of Christ who took on humble form and participated in the transitory world. A second possible view is that by Christ’s atoning sacrifice all things have been redeemed. He came for the imperfect, the downtrodden, the unworthy. With the nitty-gritty specifics of contemporary life we are brought to the cross to be re-formed into something new.

Artists working in a medieval monastery pushed the human limits of imagination and manual skill to illuminate the exquisite Book of Kells. They created complex interlace patterns with which to subdue abstract beasts within a symmetrical cross. What wouldn’t they have given for tools like the digital...
camera and computer that Wolfram puts to such good use?

We are in a time when some Christian churches deliberately eliminate every visual cross from their premises. This choice seems to play down the significance of the cross and sacrificial living for more user-friendly themes such as “Jesus as life coach.” In Regarding the Cross Wolfram succeeds in upholding the centrality of the theology of the cross with conviction and produces what he intends, a source of personal meditation.

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Practicing Passion
Kenda Creasy Dean
Grand Rapids, Michigan
William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2004

Finally we have a book that addresses the “something is missing” feeling that thoughtful pastors, youth leaders and campus ministers have occasionally experienced in their ministering of the Gospel. Author Kenda Creasy Dean believes that the church’s ministry among young adults has been more about keeping them in the pews, raising mature adults, and appeasing our need to have an active youth program rather than connecting them to the passion of Jesus Christ.

Youth, by God’s creative nature, are passionate. Young adults are the ones who have “causes,” make seemingly irrational decisions, and proclaim love as the one thing worthy to die for. To be a “nobody” is the greatest fear facing youth. The church in the 20th century missed this developmental and significant characteristic of youth, and as a result has sought to tame and program youth rather than let them be transformed by the passionate love and person of Christ.

What is surprising (and refreshing!) about Dean’s book is that she does not succumb to the “solution” of better programs, educational strategies, and more age-appropriate models; rather, she goes back to theology. Therein lies the next surprise. She speaks of the flabby theological identity of liberal Protestantism which has turned the church away from enacting the radical love of God who sent his Son to the cross. She pleads for Christian ministers to preach, teach and enact the Gospel in a theological framework that is rooted in the suffering and sacrificial love of Jesus. She urges the church and its workers to open a “portal” between Christ and young people. That portal, she affirms, lies in Word and Sacrament as God’s passionate reaching out for His people.

This is not a “how to” book. However, any campus minister worth his or her salt will be able to take her well-researched claims and utilize them in his/her ministry. This is not to say that there are no practical suggestions, even though the book intends to help the reader modify his or her perspective. The book contains voluminous footnotes accenting a well-read author.

The middle section of the book bogs down a bit in psychosocial perspectives and developmental psychology language. However, if the reader is patient, there are plenty of thought-provoking gems to be mined. Throughout the book the language may be somewhat unfamiliar and uncomfortable for frequent readers of Lutheran theological resources. However, there is nothing objectionable to a Lutheran readership. In one chapter Dean makes an interesting analysis of the passion of sex and the passion of faith. Not everyone will appreciate her insightful connection of the two as they intersect with young people, but she easily substantiates her thesis.

People who should read this book are those who are confident enough to question their own approach and attitudes about ministry. It will cause them to examine whether their preaching, teaching, mentoring and befriending have helped young people to intimately associate with the passion of Christ. While some adults may want to curtail and tame the passion of youth, Dean encourages the minister of the Gospel to steer it to the cross and let the youth be shaped by Christ Himself through Scripture.

This book will be especially relevant for campus ministers because of their ministry to those very young people who are seeking something (or some One?) to radically believe rather than to just be assimilated into the “niceness” of modern American Christianity.

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