Thank You, Bill Wolfe

for thirteen years of exceptional leadership in designing and overseeing the graphics and layout of Issues. As readers commented, your visual gifts communicate important messages and enhance each edition.

Welcome, Paul Berkbigler

in assuming responsibility for the graphics and design of Issues. Your creativity and passion for communicating through the visual arts will add much to this publication.

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 for America. "Campus ministry is to be formulated.”

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

Some Christians will always be “arm-chair” missionaries, others long to faithfully serve in the furthest 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 “crucial event” with her Japanese neighbor, a teenager while knocking shelves together to invite an animist Hmong friend to her youth group meeting, a sales representative willing to offer 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 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 many Christians seem to believe we can let Christians seem to believe we can let these students have numerous opportunities to hear the Gospel if we 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 “Wizards” on a computer—doing many tasks at the same time. Thus we send them off to college. Young people who have had lots of contacts with adults in high school through their teachers, guidance counselors, coaches, and hand 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. Often parents 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 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 you 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 church 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 stepping into the home of an American. Collegiate churches and church volunteers who offer to provide opportunities for international students 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 students with real life work. 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 homes, 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.

Pastor Mark Heilman
Memorial Lutheran Church
and Student Center
Ames, Iowa

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 Leagues 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...
Kathrine Denny is currently part of the Evangelical Lutheran Institute of Technology are located, and 100,000 most of these institutions are located on the for this are no doubt manifold. For example, positions in society and would be able to pastors and church leaders. Moreover, Ivy League schools produce a large number of the church. is why Ivy League campuses should be a focus of the church. Our pastors are among the best-intellectual aspect of campus ministry in the faithful students. The and sisters in mutual encouragement, doing students to live their calling to faith as brothers and sisters, there must be a pastor directly involved with the ministry. A Christian community must be understanding of the faith.

George Kirkup, Ph.D.

Student, Concordia Theological Seminary
Fort Wayne, Indiana

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 do not “enter” the university, they be in that mix is the living voice of the Gospel. It is also 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 is the small, private institution or the public “thank you” to Rev. Rudy Rehmer for (And this gives me a chance to say an enormous gratitude so many of us through our years at Purdue University.) But the calendar and the culture have turned. Vietnam and Watergate forged strong strains. In the economy was even transformed. Healthcare and transportation costs have skyrocketed. The American church has largely cared in to shallow religious consumption. Communism’s monolithic crumbling has the genome has been mapped, terrorism is influenced upon us, and we engaged in yet another war. Internet communication, globalization, feminism, post-modernism, changed sexual ethics, malignant 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:

- Students are neither entirely cynical, nor glibly naive. They are sophisticated, and they think they know what they are talking about. Many of them are political.
- Students seek depth and clarity of thought; they are not significantly impressed with glibly naïve. They are sophisticated, and they 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. That 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 communication in the marketplace of ideas could be different than most other settings for Gospel communication.

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 work, the 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 be different than most other settings for Gospel communication.

The Rev. Dirk Reek
Assistant Professor of Theology
Concordia University, Nebraska

was at Berkeley. I became a Lutheran and, recognizing the lack of a Lutheran ministry there, helped to found the Lutheran Student Fellowship in Berkeley.

(‘Ivy League’ is used here to refer to all top academic institutions.) I’m 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-trained, well-educated, young people have on their contemporaries 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 ministry among Ivy League campuses, although I have not done a careful study. The reasons for this are no doubt manifold. For example, these institutions are located on the coasts where the LCMS is not strong. There are 100,000 students at these institutions, and the LCMS church in the Cambridge (population 100,000) where Harvard and Massachusetts Institute of Technology are located, and 100,000 most of these institutions are located on the for this are no doubt manifold. For example, positions in society and would be able to pastors and church leaders. Moreover, Ivy League schools produce a large number of the church. is why Ivy League campuses should be a focus of the church. Our pastors are among the best-intellectual aspect of campus ministry in the faithful students. The and sisters in mutual encouragement, doing students to live their calling to faith as brothers and sisters, there must be a pastor directly involved with the ministry. A Christian community must be understanding of the faith.

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