



Office of the President
The Reverend Matthew C. Harrison
President of the Synod

The Seventeenth Week after Pentecost
October 13, 2011

Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity! (Psalm 133:1)

Dear Brothers in Christ,

The church is losing her young people. This is a concern we all share. While some fall away during high school, by far the greatest losses occur during the college years. Our young adults are bombarded by a secular worldview that is antagonistic to their Christian faith. College campuses have become a place where the truth of God's Word is mocked, the divinity of Christ is questioned, and the church is scorned.

While the Synod has a tremendous system of Concordia colleges and universities, the vast majority of our young people attend secular institutions of higher education. Showing great foresight, past generations gave of their resources to establish campus ministries at major universities throughout the nation. However, over the years, as both local and national support has decreased, a number of campus ministries have been dissolved or closed. The recent events surrounding the sale of University Lutheran Chapel in Minneapolis, Minn., a vibrant and thriving campus ministry, are but another tragic chapter.

After too many years of being distant from campus ministry, the Synod is prepared to take leadership once again. The Synod cannot do campus ministry, but we can give voice to the importance of campus ministry, encouraging, supporting, and coordinating it wherever it is taking place.

As I write, the Office of National Mission is assembling a campus ministry task force, and plans are underway to host a future national campus ministry conference. We look forward to collaborating with many wonderful people who are already laboring tirelessly in this essential ministry and fertile mission field.

Now is the time to renew our efforts. While many have faithfully labored in campus ministry, they have not always received our support. The Synod simply cannot afford to sit on the sideline while faithful campus congregations are being closed. College students need Word and Sacrament ministry. They need faithful pastors and workers who will care, teach and prepare them for life in, but not of, the world. In short, they need Jesus.

The Office of National Mission will ensure that a larger voice is given to campus ministry so that it is valued and supported throughout the Synod once again. Investing in campus ministry invests in the future of the Church; it shepherds our young people when they need us most and builds up future leaders in the church.

As you are able, I encourage you to invest in the future of University Lutheran Chapel in Minneapolis so campus ministry can continue to flourish at the University of Minnesota. While the building they have

utilized for campus ministry for over 60 years will be sold, the Word of the Lord will never be silenced. The Minnesota South District has encouraged them to continue ministry in that place. Please consider making a contribution to help see that this happens. You can donate directly through their website, or by sending checks through the mail to:

University Lutheran Chapel
1101 University Ave. SE
Minneapolis, MN 55414
612-331-2747
www.ulcmn.org

This is not the time for us to abandon campus ministry, but the time to more fully embrace and expand it. Please continue to support all the campus ministries throughout the Synod, and encourage the development of new campus outreach where none is taking place. Let us together be about keeping the souls of our precious children and bearing witness in an increasingly godless culture. What an exciting and dynamic place to be engaged in witness, mercy, and life together!

Finally, please join me in praying for the youth of our church:

Gracious Father, Your Son grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and all people. Bless, guide, and govern the children and young people of Your Church by Your Holy Spirit, that they may grow in grace and in the knowledge of Your Word. Grant that they may serve You well and usefully, developing their talents not for their own sakes but to Your glory and for the welfare of their neighbor. Protect and defend them from all danger and harm, giving Your holy angels charge over them, through Jesus Christ our Lord. (For Young Persons, *LSB* 315)

May God bless and guide our increased efforts to care for Christ's sheep throughout their college years so they may be preserved in the one true faith. If you would like to share ideas or thoughts as we move forward, please contact Rev. Bart Day, Executive Director of the Office of National Mission (*bart.day@lcms.org*).

Sub cruce,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matthew Harrison". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Pastor Matthew Harrison
Let's go! Mark 1:38