Lutheran Campus Ministries in Greater Milwaukee, Inc. – 2014 Synodical Report to the Greater Milwaukee Synod

As the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly begins its work this weekend – the Lutheran Campus Ministries in Greater Milwaukee celebrate the completion of another powerful program year at the campuses of Marquette University and University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee.

As you will read below, our Campus Pastors: Pastor Jessica Short (Marquette University) and Pastor Rachel Young Binter (UWM) continue to provide powerful programing to the students who attend these academic institutions within our synod. The students of these campus ministry programs as well as our wonderful Campus Pastors are an incredible asset to our synod ministries.

The Board of Directos of Lutheran Campus Ministries in Greater Milwaukee, Inc. meet monthly to provide support, review, and oversight to these ministries. Our present board members are: Richard Johnson, President; Dorothy Tate, Secretary; Kris Collett, Treasurer; Jeff Barrow, Bishop; At large Board – Russell Fung, Mary Lou Zuege, and Zac Meyer; Student Representatives – Nicole Garey (Marquette University), Brianna Heeley (UWM); and Ex-officio member from Marquette’s Campus Ministry Center – Steve Blaha.

Dave Groenewold from the synod staff, provides complete financial oversight for all the accounting of Lutheran Campus Ministries in Greater Milwaukee, Inc. He provides invaluable financial oversight and direction to the board on a monthly basis.

We are so very thankful to the Greater Milwaukee Synod for the vital support that they provide to these ministries. This synod is a leader among all synods of the ELCA in its support of campus ministry. Your support provides a stable platform for these vital ministries to thrive and grow on these college campuses within the territory of our synod.

The Corner House – Lutheran Campus Ministry at UWM

It has been a full and exciting year at The Corner House as we continue to grow as a community and expand our partnerships and presence on campus.

This year we:

Expanded the peer ministry program to 8 peer ministers with the gracious support of the Siebert Foundation. These peer ministers represent three campuses - UWM, MATC, and MSOE. They also come from a diversity of faith backgrounds - Wisconsin Synod, Missouri Synod, and ELCA Lutheran, Catholic, and newly seeking.

Increased weekly worship attendance to an average of 25 to 30 people, including students, UWM staff, and friends from Lake Park Lutheran Church.
Held our annual LGBT Solidarity service in partnership with the UWM LGBT Resource Center with a Corner House student preaching his story of reconciling being both a person of faith and a member of the Trans community.

Organized and hosted “Interfaith Conversations” with students from the Muslim Student Association and Hillel (the Jewish campus ministry), creating new friendships and understanding between students of different faith traditions on campus. Several students from this group will be attending a training at the Interfaith Youth Corp in Chicago this summer in order to expand this work on campus. The training is being paid for by a fund on campus and will also be attended by Pastor Rachel and the director of the newly established Program for Spiritual and Religious Life at UWM.

Continued our weekly Wednesday morning free fair trade coffee and breakfast, welcoming students from the Muslim Student Association, Hillel, the LGBT Center, and those who simply wander in off the sidewalk to share table fellowship and friendship with us.

Took 12 students to stay at Seafarers and International House in New York City for spring break. The group volunteered at two food programs and a program for older adults, visited the Ground Zero Memorial and the Muslim Community Center nearby, and worshiped at Trinity Lutheran and learned about their work in opening a shelter in their church for homeless LGBT youth.

Partnered with the Religious and Spiritual Life programs at UWM and Union Programming to provide a labyrinth in the Union for students to use for meditation and centering prior to finals week in both the fall and spring semesters.

Shared a great partnership with Lake Park Lutheran, with students working in the nursery, leading worship and Sunday School, and hosting a brat fry, and Lake Park generously providing us with meals for worship, financial support, and steadfast friendships.

Finished work on The Corner House renovation - interior rooms on all three floors painted, flooring replaced or restored, kitchens renovated, new windows and gutters installed, and tuck pointing complete. All done using green friendly materials.

And as chair of the Spiritual and Religious Communities at UWM, Pastor Rachel helped create new working documents for this organization to solidify its purpose and relationship with UWM so that more cooperative ministry can take place on campus between the many campus ministry centers and the newly created Spiritual and Religious Life program at UWM.

These, however, are bullet points. They cannot capture all the moments of tender ministry between students such as our Monday night class laying hands on a student from Taiwan and praying for him when he received the news by phone that his grandmother had died, or the joy of watching Muslim students smiling and laughing as they helped our Corner House students dye Easter eggs, or the eagerness of the worshiping community to gather around fresh baked communion bread and embrace each other during the passing of the peace out of the deep love they have come to hold for one another.
Campus ministry at UWM is alive and lively and a beautiful vision of the kingdom of God as we keep stretching to truly see all people as God’s children and greet them with the heart of Christ.

Thank you so much for supporting this ministry with your financial gifts so that it can keep transforming these amazing young adults, because they will, in turn, transform our church and empower us all to speak with deeper meaning and passion to the diverse and ever-changing world that God loves.

To get a glimpse of this year’s events, go to our photos at:

https://www.facebook.com/TheCornerHouseLCMUWM

Lutheran Campus Ministry – Marquette University

It was a wonderful year of ministry at Marquette University. The vision statement for LCM is ‘Lutheran Campus Ministry is a place where Love is expressed and found.’ We lived into this vision statement fully through worship, fellowship, and service. It is hard to summarize all of the ministry that took place, but here are just a few highlights of the 2013-2014 Academic Year.

- The Peer Ministry program included seven highly gifted student leaders. As peer ministers they participated in the fall leadership training retreat and worked on campus to plan worship, organize fellowship events, organize service events, reach out to new students. They also covenanted to meet weekly as a group to plan these events, work at least one hour in the office each week, meet with Pastor Jess at least once a month for an individual meeting, and participate in Campus Ministry Sunday.
- Fall Retreat with UWM students to learn about Peer Ministry with Lyle Griner from Peer Ministry Inc.
- LCM provides the only weekly worship service on campus that welcomes all people to the table. We continue to witness to others and share God’s radical hospitality with all those who come to worship.
- Community Night in the fall at Redeemer Lutheran Church that included a free meal to all students
- Student led book study with ‘The Reason I Jump’ in the spring to help facilitate conversation around autism
- Susannah Bartlow, Director of the Gender and Sexuality Resource Center at Marquette, worked with student leaders on issues of gender and sexuality
- Progressive Dinner at student apartments
- Fall Lock-In
- Halloween Party in cooperation with Redeemer, St. Paul’s and Our Saviors
- Christmas party to make cookies, decorate the trees at Redeemer, and sing Christmas carols
- Winter Retreat with UWM
- Spring break trip to Nicaragua- Our group included three current undergrads, one graduate of Marquette, one friend of LCM, one local pastor, and Pastor Jess. We also
fundraised and donated $500 to the Youth Against Violence Network in San Francisco Libre to help with their new radio program

- Milestone Ministry- Students make the stones and have created their own college milestones (i.e.- high point, low point, new home, relationship, service, journey, achievement, etc.). These stones are received and prayed for during worship as a way walk with one another and share prayer concerns

- LCM had a Relay For Life team at the Marquette Relay for Life and we raised almost $1000 for the cause

- Participation in Interfaith conversations and meals with Hillel, Muslim Student Association, and the Campus Ministry Office