

Making **a** **D**IFFERENCE

NORTHEASTERN IOWA SYNOD, EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

CAMPUS MINISTRY

University students call it *home*

Some of today's church leaders sit in Iowa universities facing angst—new profs, unfamiliar ideas, peers unlike their high school buddies, assignments, grades, cash...

Rev. Fritz Wehrenberg, Iowa State University campus ministry, said, "These concerns underlie four deeper ones that have troubled 19- to 24-year-olds for decades—

- Who am I?
- Whom am I in relationship with?

WEHRENBURG,
Iowa State University, Ames



STUDENTS see themselves in the visual mission statement of Iowa State University's Lutheran Center.





DOTZEL, University of Iowa, Iowa City



A MILWAUKEE youth and University of Iowa student cook and chat.

- Who will I become?
- What will I do?

Your role

That’s where you step in, funding synod campus ministry support.

“Campus ministries create *home* for students on your behalf,” said Rev. Robert Dotzel, University of Iowa campus ministry.

“Northeastern Iowa Synod partners that support Lutheran Campus Ministry of Iowa are to be thanked.”

Through synod support and congregation partnership, Lutherans fund four Iowa campus ministries that help students prosper and flourish at Drake University, Iowa State University, University of Iowa, and University of Northern Iowa.

In addition to worship and devotional life, they offer—

- Food
- Leadership opportunities
- Home away from home
- An atmosphere to seek answers.
- Service projects

Food

Everyone must eat.

“A campus ministry motto is *Feed them, and they will come,*” said Rev. John Chadwick, Drake University campus ministry.

“We offer food for the body, such as birthday pies, pizza outings,

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and cookouts at my home, and soul food—worship and Bible study.”

University of Iowa campus ministry hosts Sunday night *Feed a Friend*.

Dotzel said, “Students invite their friends, and peer ministers cook food for 60. In summer, we grill outside Old Brick, our campus ministry center, and invite passersby for supper. Once inside, they learn that we are smiling faces that aren’t threatening. They get connected with us.”

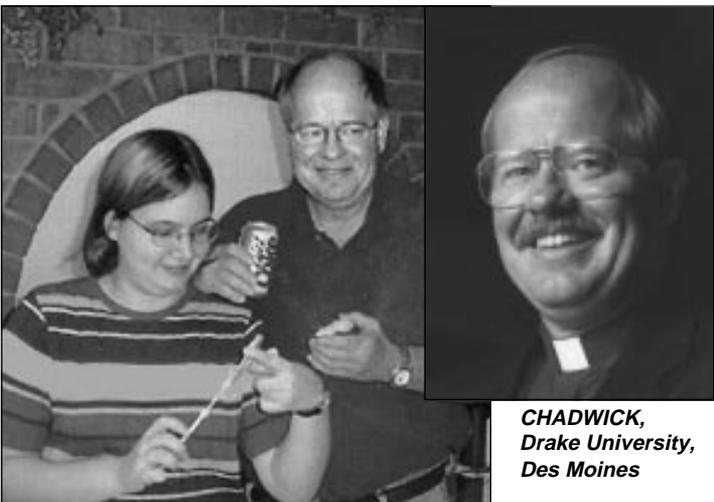
“But,” Chadwick said, “kids are kids and can change their minds about where to eat supper while they’re on the way.”

Often university students, although regular and active in their *home* congregations, don’t connect with the church as a student.

“At this time in their lives, students may not put church activities into their new schedules,” Chadwick said. “Discouraging, because people measure success by numbers and small groups are the norm for campus ministry. God definitely works through small groups, where relationships are begun and start growing.”

University of Iowa averages 50 students involved each week; Iowa State University, 65 at Sunday worship, 32 Wednesday evening. Its Friday breakfast attracts a dozen; Sunday supper and Bible study, 18.

REV. JOHN CHADWICK wears two hats, maybe three—campus minister at Drake University, pastor at Grace, Des Moines, assistant cookie decorator with Amanda Bushman, Caledonia, Michigan.



**CHADWICK,
Drake University,
Des Moines**



DARDÓN, University of Northern Iowa, Cedar Falls



JESS WARRIOR, University of Northern Iowa student, requests a Pacific Ocean baptism on the Guatemala service trip.

Large numbers—800—receive Dotzel’s e-mail devotions at University of Iowa. Wehrenberg’s Iowa State e-mail list tops 1,000 students, and each week, he averages four replies.

Home away from home

Freshmen often make their first friends through campus ministry.

Dotzel said, “They come from small towns, feel lost in dorms, find their way here, and get connected.”

Rev. Diane Dardón, University of Northern Iowa campus ministry, said, “Students are pulled in so many directions, and it’s easy to take a path that doesn’t build on faith. They struggle and come here when they need a place to find their roots.”

Feelings of community develop, which is why *professional wrestling night* appeared on the campus ministry calendar.

“A student is a professional wrestler,” Dardón said, “so we all went to cheer for him.

“The most concrete way to know that Jesus’ message reaches students is seeing it lived in their daily lives—in fellowship, through interest in one another, during finals week, while working through family problems. Campus ministry builds a community where students feel secure, safe, and relaxed.”

Students model the Christian life, which empowers them.

Service projects

Eager to serve, students donate break times to do service, paying their own expenses.

University of Iowa campus ministry offered 15 students a weekend in inner city Milwaukee at an after-school program,

food pantry, and homeless shelter. Then, spring break saw 14 students at Central City Mission, San Bernardino, to refurbish homes, do neighborhood outreach, and help in Saturday school. By attending orientation sessions and reading, some students earned university credit through schools of social work and religion.

“It was amazing to see the group bond,” Dotzel said, “and students who weren’t Lutheran experienced the church in action and asked questions about theology and church life.”

Later, campus ministry brought San Bernardino’s peer educators to Iowa City.

“Campus ministry is breaking new ground in evangelism and outreach,” Dotzel said. “It’s mission—the church engaging the world in exciting ways.”

This year, Iowa State University campus ministry offered another of its popular Appalachia service trips and a five-day Benedictine monastery experience at Conception Abbey, Missouri.

University of Northern Iowa’s Guatemala service trip was so popular that most spaces for next year are filled.

“We’re earning the reputation of offering one of the campus’s best mission trips,” Dardón said. “Participants are guaranteed to have their hearts turned and do some serious mission work on behalf of the cross.”

University of Northern Iowa students helped roof the synod’s newest church—New Hope in Farley, and campus ministries are active in projects such as Habitat for Humanity and UNICEF.

Leadership opportunities

Students lead as peer ministers, board members, and youth workers.

Peer ministers are students

UNIVERSITY students serve through campus ministry mission trips—donating their break time and paying expenses. Campus ministries visited Appalachia, California, Guatemala (right), Missouri, and Wisconsin.



who keep campus ministry goals and programs relevant. An Aid Association for Lutherans' grant helped Drake sponsor a peer ministry workshop and hire its first peer ministers.

Chadwick said, "They meet students, publicize what's coming up, plan events, send weekly devotions, and contact new students."

Five volunteer peer ministers assist at the University of Iowa. Four will be called by their peers at Iowa State University. Peer ministers increase to six at University of Northern Iowa, as an Episcopalian joins the team to work with Episcopalians.

Students also serve with alumni, professors, pastors, and administrators on campus ministry governing boards.

Dardón said, "Student voices are heard through these student board members. An example is when students planned a faculty and staff luncheon, expecting to use china. They found the china unusable and bought plastic. The waste bothered them. They suggested decent dishes and a dishwasher, and the board said, 'Great, do it.' Now, we have place settings for 75."

Dishes were cheap, because a rental company was liquidating.

"Good ideas come to fruition," Dardón said. "God affirms what we do."

University students work with youth. University of Northern Iowa students host a synod junior high lock-in. Iowa State University students assist with congregations' confirmation programs, lead a lock-in on the sacraments, and plan a summer high school program, WIYLDE (tri-synod youth leadership and discipling). It creates Christian community and discipleship at a church college—this year Luther College—"in an atmosphere less outdoorsy than a camp," Wehrenberg said.

Drake University students teach Sunday school and lead worship



IN A BIG WAY, Marcy Huck, Zion (Jubilee), La Porte City, helps Drake University campus ministry lead worship at Grace, Des Moines. She preaches!

Definitions

National Lutheran Campus Ministry, Inc., an ELCA corporation, maintains, develops, and promotes Christian ministry in academic settings. Churchwide director is Sue Rothmeyer, former campus ministry lay associate at Iowa State University, Ames. Deployed director for our region is Rev. Galen Hora, St. Paul, Minnesota, who also serves as assistant director and advancement director for campus ministry.

Lutheran Campus Ministry of Iowa oversees campus ministries at Drake University, Iowa State University, University of Iowa, and University of Northern Iowa. Robin Souhrada, Cedar Falls, serves as head.

Lutheran Student Movement USA is an organization of students from secular and church colleges and universities. It supports and advances faith and witness in academic settings and plans an annual national conference during Christmas break. The next meets in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

at Grace, Des Moines, and University of Iowa's worship combo plays off-campus.

An atmosphere to seek answers

Dardón said, "Many times, a student drops in and says, *May I talk?* Recently, over a late-night cup of coffee, a coed asked about being a woman in ordained ministry. She has gifts, talents, and the heart for ministry. She might do it. If so, she'll be the eighth interested in seminary."

Wehrenberg at Iowa State University said six students wrestle with the seminary decision, and Dotzel at the University of Iowa, reports a graduate is in seminary and two hope to enter.

"Students who come to campus ministry want to build on their faith," Dardón said. "They want to continue spiritual growth, and campus ministry helps them experience a Christ-like life."

Wehrenberg at Iowa State University designed a two-semester discernment program called *Reaching In and Reaching Out*. Students identify how God has gifted them, then explore how God wants them to use their gifts.

Wehrenberg said, "Student response overwhelmed me. Eighteen students were invited to participate; 17 said *yes*."

The program includes weekly Bible study, group work, a paper, a seminary weekend, then leadership—welcoming new students and reaching out through campus ministry. An Aid Association for Lutherans' grant pays expenses for two years.

Rev. Darrel Gerriets, assistant to the bishop, said, "When kids hit campus, a lot of ideas are thrown at them. Some ideas are

Partners!

The Northeastern Iowa Synod strongly supports **Lutheran Campus Ministry of Iowa**, which funds campus ministries at Drake University, Iowa State University, University of Iowa, and University of Northern Iowa. This year, the synod sends it \$30,200.

In addition, 25 synod **partner congregations** match support to Lutheran Campus Ministry of Iowa with another \$30,000. One-seventh of the synod's 185 congregations contribute.

Synod staff provide leadership for campus ministry—

- Rev. Darrel Gerrietts serves on the board of the Lutheran Campus Ministry of Iowa.
- Rev. Nancy Larson solicits campus ministry partners.
- Rev. Mark Anderson is on the University of Northern Iowa campus ministry board.

junk; some are a valid challenge to faith. It's important to be able to talk to a campus minister, a local theologian in residence. Campus ministry provides that support and a peer group. It's the local representative of our church, our partner on university campuses. Campus ministry is now the strongest I've seen."

Dardón at University of Northern Iowa said, "University campuses are such important places for our church to be. The church is there at a time in our young adults' lives when they are



GERRIETTS

struggling with many things... career, vocation, parents. At such moments, they need a place where they aren't threatened, and campus ministry is that place!"

Send university student information to
Lutheran campus ministries at

Drake University
<gracejohn5@aol.com>

Iowa State University
<fritz@isu.lutheran.org>

University of Iowa
<lcm-elca@uiowa.edu>

University of Northern Iowa
<lscuni@cfu.net>

In June, congregations receive
Student Name Request Forms.