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INKLINGS...

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By All That Is Sacred

I recently completed a six-month sabbatical from February - July, 2017. In light of my 15 years of Chapel ministry, the Campus Chapel board graciously approved the sabbatical. Two grants provided support funding: one from Classis Lake Erie provided extra staffing in my absence and another from the Louisville Institute covered sabbatical expenses related to a study project.

My topic of study? Sacred space and sacred place. This blended of my pastoral fascination with human encounters with the divine (through worship, prayer, liturgy, Word) and my ecological interest in how people experience God or sacredness through nature.

While much of the sabbatical was spent reading and reflecting in Ann Arbor, I traveled regularly. I retreated at three monasteries – two Trappist monasteries in the US and Iona Abbey in Scotland. I spent a weekend in Houston giving a presentation at a “Re-enchantment of Medicine” conference. A trip to California allowed me to follow the footsteps of John Muir through King’s Canyon and Sequoia National Parks in California. I took in an environment and religion conference in Edinburgh, Scotland. Finally, I

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spent a week cycling the north coast of Lake Huron, a trip which completed for me the circumnavigation of 4 of the 5 Great Lakes (Superior still looms!)

The sabbatical was fabulous, especially the

trips to California and Scotland. For the former, I took the California Zephyr across the U.S., then camped in Kings Canyon and Sequoia. Sunday I spent “sauntering” through the Giant Sequoia grove. I highly recommend it.

Sauntering is different than just walking. The word “saunter” comes from the French for “holy land”, and it was a term used of French beggars who claimed to be raising money to go on pilgrimage to the holy land. Saunterers were itinerants who acted as if they were people of purpose but weren’t really heading anywhere specific.

That described me to a T. I sauntered through the Giant Sequoia Grove, taking 4 hours to traverse about 2 miles of unmaintained trail. I

(Continued on page 2)



Sandy & Rolf Bouma at the southern tip of the Island of Iona. Here St. Columba landed his coracle in 563 A.D., bringing Christianity to Scotland.

walked 200 feet across a flooded meadow astride a fallen sequoia, 15 feet in the air. I listened to the voice of God in the wind through the Sequoias; the water flowing through the meadow. It was sacred ground, and if it weren't early May with patches of snow lingering in the Sierras, I would have been tempted to take off my shoes.

For Iona Abbey, Sandy and I booked a week-long retreat with the Iona Community. Worship morning and evening. Hikes in sun and rain across the island. A day spent in pilgrimage and prayer. Forming community over meals and chores in the Abbey refectory. A jaunt to Staffa to see Fingal's Cave and a puffin colony. Every moment of that week was precious.

It's hard to believe it's over. The experience lingers. This fall I preached a 4-part sermon series on "By All That Is Sacred." I am also teaching two UM courses this fall: an upper level course on *Ecology and Religion* and a first-year seminar on *Environment, Religion, Spirituality, and Sustainability*. The sabbatical experiences inform both those courses.

I feel a great debt of gratitude to the Chapel Board, to the Chapel community for its support, to Pastor Matt for shouldering a heavier load in my absence, and to Kyle Meyaard-Schaap who picked up my essential responsibilities.

-Pastor Rolf

Alumni Spotlight: Allyson Green

Those familiar with Allyson during her Ann Arbor days will not be surprised to learn that her vocation involves getting healthy and sustainably-grown food in the hands of as many people as possible. Her dual Masters degrees from UM's School of Public Health and School of Natural Resources and Environment led her to Augsburg College in Minneapolis, MN (now Augsburg University) to be the Director of their Campus Kitchen. She is also the school's Chief Sustainability Officer.

At the Augsburg Campus Kitchen, part of a nationwide network of nonprofits at over 50 universities, Allyson works with students on all aspects of their engagement with food. She organizes community gardens, educational events and much more, but the bulk of her time is spent on coordinating a food recovery program. She helps students turn leftovers from the Augsburg dining halls into delicious and appealing meals that they then take into the community to share with area residents. But the students don't just serve these meals – they sit down and eat with neighbors who join them at their community partner locations.

Allyson's work has drawn acclaim in her own community, but this year her Campus Kitchen also won the Nopolitos Award from the National Campus Kitchen organization. The award is named for the flat stems of a prickly pear cactus (the most unfamiliar ingredient a Campus Kitchen has received and successfully served), and goes to a kitchen that has shown particular resourcefulness and creativity in the face of adversity. This spring the Augsburg dining hall suffered a small fire and had to close temporarily. Dining services staff were stretched simply providing meals for students and didn't have the capacity to provide the donated food the Campus Kitchen program depends on. Allyson and her student interns turned to their community partners and another local university campus for both food donations and cooking space, and found ways to keep providing meals to their clients.

Allyson loves her work and the opportunity to mentor the student interns who work for her. She says, "Every day is different (though free food is pretty standard), and I'm constantly learning from and with students and neighbors as we explore the complexities of the food system together." She's an example of lived out commitments to caring for God's creation and loving neighbors, one forkful at a time.



Allyson Green (far right) and Augsburg students hoist some impressive eggplants from the Augsburg community garden.

News & Notes

The Center for Faith & Scholarship co-sponsored the 2017 Veritas Forum at UM on November 9. The speaker was **Dr. James K.A. Smith**, professor of philosophy at Calvin College. He spoke on "You Are What You Love", which is the title of his recent book. The audience of over 600 persons, mostly students, were challenged to recognize the loves which drive their lives and their identities, and to assess whether their loves are truly worth the commitments they make.



The Q&A at the end of the lecture revealed the diversity of lecture attendees, with questions originating from skepticism and agnosticism as well as well-formed faith. The lecture and ensuing interactions were a great example of appropriate religious inquiry at a state university.

Chapel member **Allison Meyaard-Schaap** served as an emcee for the event. Other ministries involved were Knox Presbyterian Church, InterVarsity, Cru, Harvest Mission and New Life Church.

Ten UM undergraduate students were appointed as 2017-18 ProVocation Fellows as part of the ProVocation Project through CFS and the Campus Chapel. This is the second year of the Fellows program, which is underwritten by a grant from the Lilly Foundation Campus Ministry Theological Exploration of Vocation program. Fellows will reflect on vocation under the mentorship of Chapel staff. A weekend retreat will highlight the ProVocation year.

Fellows are usually student leaders at campus ministries. This year's Fellows are involved with InterVarsity, Cru, and University Christian Outreach. They are: Brett Ivey, Bruna Iunessanches, Bryan Culbert, Ethan Lu, Geoffrey McClung, Harrison Feng, Jessie Spencer, John Mason, Kenneth Wang, and Samantha Parkinson.

Kyle Meyaard-Schaap, part-time pastoral intern at the Chapel during the past year, recently completed the candidacy process and will be ordained as a minister of

the Word on November 19. Kyle's full-time position is as director of Young Evangelicals for Climate Action (YECA), a division of the Evangelical Environmental Network that organizes young adults for involvement on climate issues. Kyle recently attended the Bonn Climate Conference and participated in the unofficial U.S. delegation.

Pastor Matt Ackerman is serving as president of the Association of Religious Counselors (ARC) at UM for the 2017-18 academic year. ARC is an organization for campus ministry professionals and intersects with the university administration through the Student Affairs division. ARC frequently is called upon to provide input on issues affecting student life and campus climate

This fall's Chapel discussion group, led by Pastor Matt, is reading Howard Thurman's classic book *Jesus and the Disinherited*. It meets on Wednesday evening following the Chapel's weekly Wednesday Night Dinner.

Congratulations to **Caitlin and Drew Jackson** on the birth of their daughter, **Simona Joy Jackson**. Simona was born on July 10. On Sunday, November 5, the Chapel community and the Jackson's extended family of Caitlin and Drew Jackson had the privilege of witnessing Simona's baptism.



Chapel worship observed the 500th anniversary of the Reformation with a two-part worship series on *Semper Reformanda* ("Always Reforming").