

CAMPUS CHAPEL

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INKLINGS
the newsletter of campus chapel ministries
www.campuschapel.org





LIVING IN THE INTERIM TIME

In Irish poet John O'Donohue's "Blessing for the Interim Time," he describes what it feels like to be in between things:

"You are in this time of the interim
Where everything seems withheld.
The path you took to get here has washed out;
The way forward is still concealed from you.
The old is not old enough to have died away;
The new is still too young to be born."

He concludes with this advice,

"As far as you can, hold your confidence...
...it is difficult and slow to become new.
The more faithfully you can endure here,
The more refined your heart will become
For your arrival in the new dawn."¹

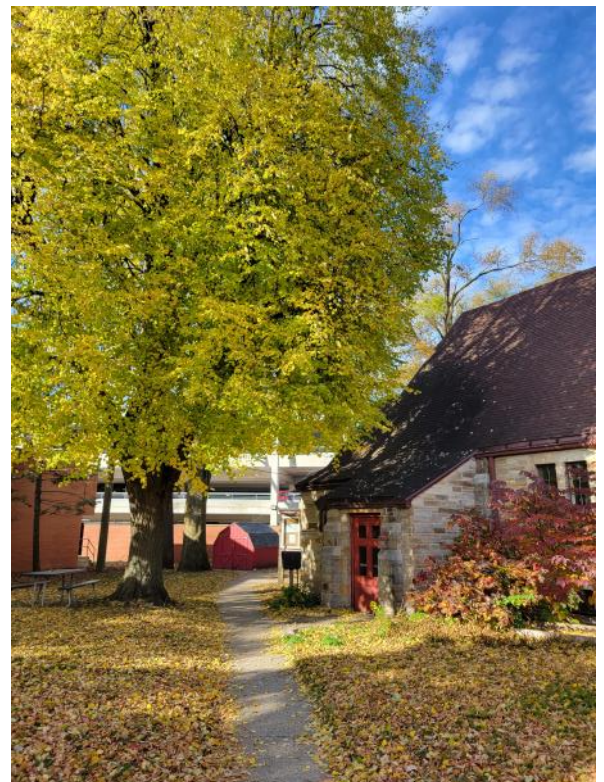
So many of the students and young adults in our ministry are in the interim time. Probably many of us are, too.

This year also feels like an in-between moment for the Campus Chapel and Center for Faith & Scholarship. For the first time in over two decades we entered an academic year with a solo pastor, something I am still getting used to! And much of the tight-knit group that saw this ministry through the height of the pandemic has graduated or transitioned out of the community.

So it feels like a good moment for us to pause and take stock. Like the Biblical prophets of old, we are looking hard at our community and our world, and asking who God is calling us to be and where God is calling us to serve right now. We are seeking God's vision for this moment in the life of this ministry we love.

The Chapel Board has outlined a visioning process based on the work of theologian Rick Osmer that asks four questions: What is going on? Why is that going on? What ought to be going on? And what are we going to do about it? These simple questions shape a four-step process that we hope to complete by the summer

of 2024. We will start by taking a good hard look at current realities (what Osmer calls the descriptive task). We will draw on expertise of those in our circle to understand those realities (the analytical task). We will ask what our under-



standing of God and God's word tells us should be our ministry realities (the normative task). And then we will put together a practical plan of action in response (the pragmatic task).

This is not easy work, and we need your help. First, please keep us in prayer. Our board and visioning team will need Godly wisdom to discern the Holy Spirit's leading in this process. Our community will need clarity and insight as we try to speak into this process. And I will need energy and encouragement as I do the work of ministry without a colleague alongside.

We also need your help to describe our current realities (that first question!). We want to hear what you think the Campus Chapel and

CFS are. What does this ministry look like at its grace-filled best? What are your hopes and dreams for its future? Watch your email for a survey that you can complete for us. And if you feel especially led to be a part of this process, email us at office@campuschapel.org and we may set up an interview with a member of the visioning team.

In the interim, ministry continues at the Chapel. As that O'Donohue poem points out, faithful endurance in the present moment leads to blessing, and this fall we have seen rich moments of ministry. We have had more new students visit this year, particularly undergrads, than in any of the previous five years. And some of these students are coming from unchurched or limited church backgrounds, which is very exciting. We have focused our fall programming (both worship and discipleship) on being rooted and grounded in Christ in

healthy ways, including a study of *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*, by Pete Scazarro. The Center for Faith & Scholarship's monthly God @ the Pub discussions and our weekly PhD Student lunches are lively and engaging gatherings.

We are in an interim time, but that is the eschatological reality of our Christian life, too, something we remember in the upcoming Advent season. God's reign is here now, but also something we await with hope and trust. We enter into this visioning process with a hope that God will show us a "new dawn" that we can embrace with "refined hearts." And we enter it with trust in a God who has always been faithful to this ministry and to the larger mission of God in the world.

- Pastor Matt

1 *To Bless the Space Between Us* by John O'Donohue. 2008: Convergent Books

FALL FUN!



The Chapel's fall clean-up is always a busy day, and this year featured some epic ivy removal. While it undoubtedly adds some charm to the building, the ivy quickly gets out of control if it's not managed. Nathan is demonstrating excellent technique here, managing to get an entire vine off in one pull.

We are very grateful to Ann Arbor Christian Reformed Church for loaning us their firepit for a fall bonfire. The roasted marshmallows and s'mores were delicious, and the location was very convenient. We are always thankful for the partnership and support of our local CRC congregation, and look forward to working together more in the future.



We had beautiful weather for our annual trip to the Dexter Cider Mill for fresh cider and donuts. We scheduled it a bit earlier in the fall, so no autumn leaves to enjoy on the bike ride, but much warmer temperatures! The trade off seemed to be worth it.

BAPTISM BRUNCH SERVICE

Back in the fall of 2019, we hosted author, baker, and theologian Kendall VanderSlice, who delivered a lecture



for us and lead a “dinner church” service. Combining liturgy and a shared meal, the service included a communion celebration that was far more than just a bite of bread and sip of wine. We shared a true sacramental feast.

This fall we took the idea one step further with a service that combined both communion *and* baptism with a

shared meal. The Sarver Attema and Teshome Timmermans families were up for trying something different. (To be fair, it was really Pastor Bailey’s idea.)

Worshippers arrived that Sunday to a sanctuary filled with beautifully decorated tables set for a meal. We began with a typical time of gathering for one of our services: a call to worship, an opening song, a prayer of confession, and a reminder of God’s grace. But then, when we passed the peace to one another, we shared fruit and donuts and perhaps a second cup of coffee!

After that time of fellowship, the congregation formed a circle around the perimeter of the worship space and we moved into our communion liturgy. That culminated with an actual shared brunch with an impres-

sive spread of quiche, muffins, salad, scones, and more.

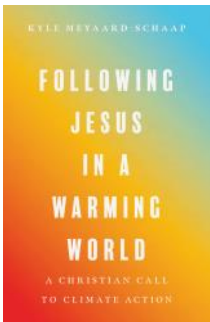
As people were finishing up their meals, we moved to the sacrament of baptism, affirming God’s promises to these two beautiful little girls and remembering God’s promises to all of us. Finally, we concluded with our community prayers and offering our gifts and ourselves for the good of God’s kingdom.

The promises of a God who provides for our daily needs and calls us each by name were woven through the whole service. It was a beautiful morning of fellowship, liturgy, sacrament, song, and (of course) food!



SAVE THE DATES: CURT THOMPSON AND KYLE MEYAARD-SCHAAP

If you are in the Ann Arbor area (or even if you’re not), consider joining us for some CFS public events coming up. On January 29 we will partner with other ministries to present psychiatrist and author Curt Thompson speaking on “How to Be Well: Health, Faith, and Being Human.” And on February 12, we are thrilled to bring back friend of the Chapel, Rev. Kyle Meyaard-Schaap, to speak about his recent book *Following Jesus in a Warming World*.



As we approach the end of the year, please remember us with your charitable giving. Our ministry would not exist without the faithful donations and support of people like you. Thank you so very much!



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