

CAMPUS CHAPEL

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INKLINGS

the newsletter of campus chapel ministries

www.campuschapel.org





A DOUBLE ISSUE!

When we arrive at the end of an academic year I'm often asked how the year went, and I don't usually have a good way to answer. How do you sum up an entire academic year's worth of worship services, community dinners, book studies, discussion groups, one-on-ones over coffee, and so much more?

And no year is the same as the one that came before! In the twelve years that I have been a pastor at the Campus Chapel I've never had a normal year. This year was no exception. We experienced community loss. It was our first year in a long time with only one pastor on staff at the Chapel. Our campus had a deeply charged year politically (and the election is *next year!*).

With everything going on, we got a bit off of our normal mailing schedule — our apologies to those who were eagerly awaiting the arrival of *Inklings* in their mailbox or email inbox! But we're making up for it with a summer double issue. This edition has twice the normal content, detailing all the happenings of the



Members of the Chapel community enjoy watching the U of M women's basketball team knock off Purdue on senior night!

Campus Chapel community and the Center for Faith and Scholarship.

Even as this year has been tumultuous on our campus, in our denomination, and in the lives of most of our students and young adults, we take comfort in the God who never succumbs to tumult and overcomes the chaos we so often perpetuate. The hope we have in Jesus is the calm in the proverbial storms of life, and we long for the Chapel to be a place of respite for our community. When we pass the peace of Christ to one another every Sunday, those are not mere words. It is the tangible expression of one of our deepest theological truths: all things hold together in Christ Jesus, so we can be at peace.

- Pastor Matt

CFS LECTURE: REV. KYLE MEYAARD-SCHAAP

Earlier this year, Pastor Matt participated in an interfaith panel sponsored by the UM chapter of the Sierra Club discussing how various religious traditions approached questions of sustainability. The four panelists, representing Judaism, Islam, Christianity, and Buddhism, all shared some reflections, followed by Q&A. The very first question asked was, “In the face of climate change, what does your religious tradition have to offer in terms of hope?”

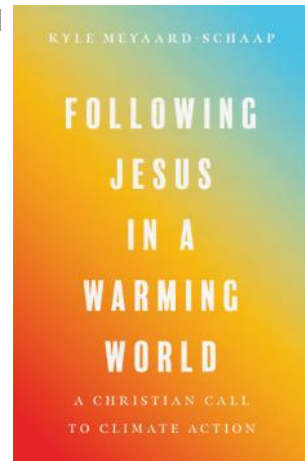
Climate anxiety is an increasingly common reality for our students. A 2021 study published in *Lancet Planetary Health* found that 60 percent of an international pool of 16 to 25 year-olds said they were very worried about the climate. Of that same survey group, half said it affects their ability to function daily. This year’s Center for Faith and Scholarship lecture featured an old friend returning to Ann Arbor, Rev. Kyle Meyaard-Schaap, to address just this sort of anxiety.

Not too many years ago Kyle moonlighted at the Chapel while he was working for Young Evangelicals for Climate Action and his spouse, Allie, completed her MSW at UM. Now he is working on a different justice

issue, serving as the Executive Director of AJS-US, which works for reform and justice in Honduras. But he joined us in February to share some insights from his recent book, *Following Jesus in A Warming World*. In addition to an on-campus lecture, Kyle did a workshop for graduate students from UM and our partner ministry at Michigan State, Campus Edge. He also led an adult ed at Ann Arbor Christian Reformed Church and preached at a combined Campus Chapel and AACRC Sunday morning worship service.



Kyle’s message of hope in the face of crisis resonated with our community. It was encouraging to hear somebody addressing the seriousness of the problem head-on, but without fatalism or cynicism. Instead, Kyle reminded us that our world, broken and scarred, still belongs to God, and we are called to be part of God’s redemptive project, both as an act of worship and an act of love for our neighbor.



CONGRATULATIONS, KATIE VAN ZANEN!

This spring saw only one graduate in the Campus Chapel community. Katie Van Zanen completed her PhD in the joint program in English and Education. Her dissertation was titled *Raised-Evangelical Writers on Social Media: Rhetoric, Resistance, and Ethical Negotiation* and it focused on social media discourse in the summer of 2020, a particularly active and interesting time!

It is hard to list all the ways Katie has been involved at the Campus Chapel and the CFS. The short version is she has done a little bit of everything, notably serving as a Chapel Board member and secretary of the board. She has also been very involved in CFS events, such as PhD Student Lunch and God @ the Pub. And she gave a very memorable introduction of Kristin Kobes Du Mez for her lecture on campus last year.

Katie is still sorting out work options for the future, but we are delighted that she and her spouse Nathan plan to stay in the area, at least for the short term, while Nathan continues to lead the Cohort Detroit program for Resonate, the CRC mission agency.



SAVE THE DATE:

WEST MICHIGAN CHAPEL REUNION!

All Campus Chapel alumni and friends in West Michigan are invited to join us

Saturday, October 19 at Calvin Christian Reformed Church in Grand Rapids.

Drop in between 12:00 and 4:00, with a short program at 2:00.

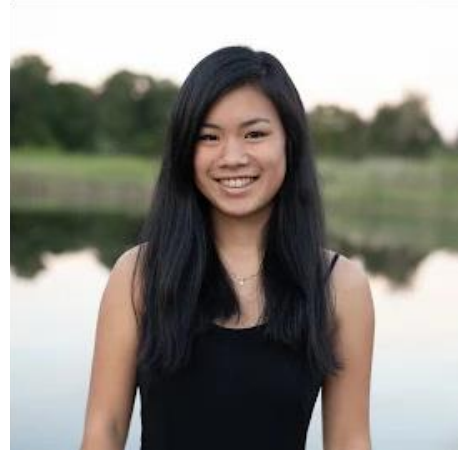
More details to come, but yes, the Michigan football game (at Illinois) WILL be on.

NEWS AND NOTES

Every once in a while, the liturgical calendar lines up just right, and we get a fortuitous alignment of things like Ash Wednesday and Valentine's Day. Because they fell on the same day this year, we had a special treat custom made for the occasion: Valentine's Day heart candies stamped with decidedly Ash Wednesday themes. They were a big hit in our community and with those who also participated in the annual Ecumenical Taizé Ash Wednesday service.



Once again, we kicked off the vegetable growing season with a Blessing of the Garden. At the conclusion of one of our Chapel worship services we all headed outside to pray for our soil, the water, the seeds, and the plants that will turn into fresh and delicious produce for Food Gatherers to distribute to those in need. This year we planted tomatoes, zucchini, chard, kale, butternut squash, cucumbers, and beans, and they're already growing like crazy!



We are delighted to announce the hiring of a summer intern for this year: Kate Tang. Kate is a very recent graduate of Wheaton College who will be starting a Master's of Divinity at Western Theological Seminary in the fall. She's an Ann Arbor native, and excited to spend the summer back in her hometown doing campus ministry with us.

VERITAS FORUM RETURNS

After taking several years off, this January saw the return of the Veritas Forum to UM. In partnership with the Veritas organization, the CFS joined nine other campus ministry organizations in presenting a conversation on “How to be Well: Mental Health, Spirituality, and Human Flourishing.” The speakers were Curt Thompson, psychiatrist, speaker, and author of *The Soul of Shame* and *Anatomy of the Soul*, joined by Victor Strecher, UM professor of Health Behavior and Health Education. The event was moderated by the Campus Chapel’s own Annika From, a PhD student in Psychology.

Dr. Thompson spoke eloquently from his Christian perspective and his medical background about the benefits that come from having a well-considered belief system, and specifically religious beliefs. Dr. Strecher, who describes himself as agnostic, also spoke at the value of living with a belief system that purposeful and intentional. There were interesting commonalities in their perspectives, but of course significant differences.

Perhaps most importantly, the conversation was marked by mutual respect and compassion, even love. Both speakers shared deeply personal stories and anecdotes, and the care for one another was clear. Unsurprisingly, the feedback from student surveys showed that the tone of the event was the just as important as the content of what the speakers shared. Of course, we at the Chapel think the mod-



erator had a great deal to do with creating the particular feel for the event and the space for the rich conversation to take place!

A video of the event is available on the Veritas Organization’s website, if you’d like to see for yourself! Just search the event’s title and you’ll find it.

SCAN TO DONATE!

The Campus Chapel and CFS can only do what we do because of the generosity of our donors. As traditional funding streams for CRC campus ministry are drying up, we need you more than ever. Our ministry would not exist without the faithful donations and support of people like you. Thank you so very much!



IN MEMORIUM: CHRISTINA CUNNINGHAM POSTEMA

Longtime Chapel community member Christina Elizabeth Cunningham Postema, age 64, passed away in Ann Arbor on January 7, 2024 surrounded by her family.

For many, it is hard to imagine the Campus Chapel without Chrissy. Until her illness, she was one of the most faithful attenders of Chapel worship, and even from home she faithfully watched our livestream. She served this community in many, many capacities. She was a board member, our treasurer, a liturgist, a Sunday School teacher, and a worship musician. She and Stephen hosted Chapel events at their home. Chrissy was a key member of the Chapel Book Club, and participated in small groups and Bible studies even up to the last months of her life, when she participated in group spiritual direction session via Zoom. Chrissy loved the Chapel, and gave countless hours of time and devotion to its ministry.



The Chapel was, of course, just a small piece of Chrissy's life of devotion and service. In the very moving obituary that he wrote, Stephen said, "Chrissy influenced those around her, especially her family and her students, to see the world through an inquisitive, peaceful, and kind lens. Chrissy was a devoted mother to her four children. Chrissy was also a lover of words and books, was passionate about music and choral singing, and was happiest in the garden or in nature. She was an accomplished academic book editor, then turned public school teacher and elementary school media specialist. 'Mrs. Postema. I need a book' was music to her ears. 'Yes, yes you do,' she would say."

A service in celebration of Chrissy's life was held at St. Andrew's Episcopal, the church where Chrissy was baptized and where Stephen and Chrissy were married. As Chrissy wanted, it was full of powerful words, moving stories, and beautiful music. Here is an excerpt from Pastor Matt's homily :

"Chrissy walked with purpose and direction, too... She walked through this world with a keen sense of curiosity and wonder, of observation and interest. Her fascination with so many things was fueled by and fed her gratitude. The attention she paid was a way she showed love. And it wasn't just the natural world, the birds and the flowers. It was her keen attention to the books she read, the music she heard and sang. And it made her a person of peace, a person of kindness.

The verse that Stephen and Chrissy chose for this moment, from the gospel of John, speaks of peace. It speaks of a peace that Bible describes as more than just the absence of conflict. It's peace that is a richness, a fullness, a rightness of things. That is the gift Christ speaks of here in John; and it's what the Psalmist speaks of in that well-known verse, Be still and know that I am God.

Psalm 46 is not shy about the troubles of our world. It names the grief and pain that we all know is a part of life, no more so than on a day like today. But it names God as a refuge, as a shelter, as helper. And then, we're invited to be still. The Psalmist isn't speaking of the stillness of inactivity, of motionlessness. This is the stillness, the peace, of a serene body of water. It's the stillness of watching Chrissy's beloved Connecticut river or Lake Michigan on the calmest of days. We know that it's far from inactive or inert; in fact, it's teeming with life and current and movement. Yet, it's at rest, it's peaceful, it's still.

That was Chrissy – a tranquil, peaceful presence, who also had a verve, a love of life, that came through in her attention to, her love of, small, beautiful things. It came through in her prayers. In our worshipping community we have time where community members can share prayer requests, and nobody shared more than Chrissy. Nobody cared more than Chrissy.

And in that, she was a reflection of the God in whom she put her trust. She understood God as one who cared for all, from the greatest to the least. She understood God's love, revealed in Jesus Christ, as a generous, encompassing, grand love, that was also manifest in a gorgeous flower, a lovely turn of phrase, a beautiful line of melody.

In the Bible, especially in the Old Testament, water is so often a metaphor for chaos, and confusion, and danger. But that Psalm we read uses the water metaphor the way Chrissy understood it. The waters that quake and rage are calmed into a river whose streams make glad the city of God. These are the still waters that run deep with the peace and love of God. Be still and know that I am God.

In the days and weeks and months and years ahead, there will be grief. It will come at expected times: birthdays, anniversaries, holidays. But it will come, too, when you don't expect it: when you catch sight of a particular bird; when you hear a few bars of that particular Stevie Wonder song; when you run across a copy of a Patrick O'Brien novel, or one of the many other books that Chrissy loved. Don't turn away from that grief. Don't bury it. Death and cancer and pain is not that way it is supposed to be, not what we were created for.

But remember that the extent of your grief is a measure of the love you hold for Chrissy, a sign of how much she meant to you, to all of us. And, perhaps, in the face of that grief, be still. Be still and know that Chrissy is at peace. Be still and know that this world she loved so deeply bears witness to a loving God. Be still and know that the peace God gives in Christ is something life, with all its anxiety and troubles, cannot take away. Friends, as Chrissy would long for us all, be at peace. Be still."



We are proud to announce the creation of the Christina Cunningham Postema Fund to support worship music and arts at the Campus Chapel. Any donations given in Chrissy's memory were designated to this fund, and you are welcome to continue to give to it. It will support initiatives like internships for student musicians, installations of liturgical art, or even commissioning new works of worship music. We are grateful for this way to keep Chrissy's memory and legacy alive at the Chapel.