



Grand Canyon Synod Report 2019

This past academic year, a surprising feeling has settled within the Lutheran Campus Ministry at Northern Arizona University, one that hadn't been felt for several years now: Stability.

It may not be intuitive that our students would find this appealing, but it is the word that they keep using. They have said that this is a place of stability. In a world of hate and fear, in academic lives accented more by change and transition than much else, what they find in us is a place of refuge. A place that they know they can come day after day, week after week, to breathe.

This is a new feeling. For the first time in three years, we have started this year with the same leadership. When students left in May, they said "see you next year," and this year, they did! This is incredibly important to the growth and prosperity of any campus ministry. In a young adult's world where everything is in flux, the church is a place where they can turn to find a place that doesn't change. This is one of the reasons we exist.

This is also our second year of being in a shared ministry relationship with Canterbury Episcopal Campus Ministry in Flagstaff. Scripture tells us that when we work together as the Body of Christ, transformation happens. We find this daily in our relationship with the Episcopalians as we join forces for bringing the redemptive, never-ending love of Christ to the NAU Campus Community. We have learned as a community about what makes us unique, and what makes us great partners in Christ. From liturgical ways to cultural differences, we are learning as much about ourselves as we are learning about each other. Ecumenical models such as what we are exploring continually graduate stronger Lutherans and Episcopalians than individual denominational communities. This relationship has also significantly added to our stability, as we are able to lean on each other and draw from each other's strengths.

Throughout this year we have worked to preserve those things which make both Lutherans and Episcopalians unique, while lifting up new and emerging ideas and practices new to everyone.

We have continued to participate in the Synod Campus Ministry retreats: joining together in La Jolla in August and in Sedona in February. At the same time, our Lutheran students have had the chance to continue to experience various Episcopalian-led retreats: at their Diocesan retreat in November and the Provincial Gathering of Episcopal College Students in April.

In our day-to-day life, we have continued to meet for a Holy Communion service on Sunday nights, and a Bible Study time on Wednesday evenings. Both of these have continued to bring growth and maturation to the students participating. We have learned in depth about the Old Testament through a study led by Pastor Kurt Fangmeier of Living Christ Lutheran Church, Flagstaff, and have seen college students come out of their shells and lead their fellow young adults in studies on the New Testament, centered around the theme of Biblical Storytelling.

New events and ways of being Church have emerged as well throughout this year. In 2018, we saw that some events such as Dinner Musical were at the end of their seasons, and we began to re-formulate how we would interact with area congregations and supporters. What has come from this is that we have begun to join with other congregations where they are, on Sunday mornings. We have been in three congregations this year (Christ Lutheran, Sedona; Holy Spirit, Las Vegas; Shepherd of the Hills, Flagstaff), and plan to begin to do these congregational visits throughout the year rather than at the end of each academic year.

Throughout all of this, we have continued to serve the community of Northern Arizona University in the best ways we know how, and it is through your continual support that we are able to do this. Thank you for allowing us to be your campus ministry for Northern Arizona University.

Respectively Submitted,

The Leadership of
Lutheran Campus Ministry at
Northern Arizona University