

Multiplying your Campus Ministry through Student Involvement: Guidelines for Campus Pastors

Edited by Roland Cap Ehlke

INTRODUCTION

These guidelines are a compilation from the 1981 Campus Pastors' Workshop. The workshop was held February 11-12 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, under the direction of the Division of Home Missions of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

The following pastors delivered essays, presented formal reactions to the essays, took part in a panel discussion, and, in one case, preached a sermonette during the two day meeting: Norman Berg, Marcus Birkholz, Robert Diener, Paul Kelm, Mark Lenz, Loren Lucht, Herbert Prahl, Paul Scharrer, Richard Stadler, Tom Trapp, Craig Weber, James Witt, Tom Zarling, Larry Zessin, Carl Ziemer. This booklet draws upon their materials and at times from the discussion of others attending the workshop. In most cases it uses their very words.

We hope these guidelines accurately reflect the theme of the 1981 Campus Pastors' Workshop: *Multiplying your Ministry through Student Involvement*. And we pray that they will be a useful tool for all involved in campus ministry—both pastors and students.

Roland Cap Ehlke

1. THE IDEAL STUDENT

To construct a model role for the student is to ask, first of all, if there is a role for the student in campus ministry. If that same question were to be asked of the parishioners in our congregations, the answer would be a definite "yes." Just as the Great Commission (Mt 28) applies to the laymen of our congregations, so it applies to the students in our campus ministry. They, too, are Christ's disciples. Every Christian hears the Savior's "Go..." and is privileged to respond. Students also are "a people belonging to God" (1 Pe 2:9); the follow-up to that fits them also, "that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." Our college young people also fit the role of being a "kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father" (Rev 1:6). When God gave "some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up..." (Eph 4:11,12) was he excluding young people, particularly the college student? We know that not to be the case.

Young Christians away at a secular college may think of themselves as somewhat detached from the heartbeat of their congregation. Maybe they felt in some sort of limbo following confirmation, during their high school years. Then, when they moved away from the home environment, they found themselves physically detached from their church, ties that are strengthened for the most part with occasional trips home on weekends or during holidays, and that's about all.

The model role would begin with a correcting of any erroneous view that being away from home means being away from the church. While they may be many miles removed from their congregation, they are never far from their Lord, who promised to be with them always (Mt 28:20). They themselves remain a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19). The Lord God is with them wherever they may be; they cannot hide or be hidden from him either in person or in spirit (Ps 139). His voice is as near to them as his Word which they carry with them.

The students that we are privileged to work with, aren't they something? What gifts God has given to so many of them! How talented and bright they are! The word "potential" keeps coming to the surface when we consider their value to the church at large and to the campus ministry in particular. We have to admit that not every one of them has the same gifts; we recognize that some of them are weak or immature in their faith; they

are not always “polished” in their approach to things. Yet they form a reservoir for service to the Lord’s kingdom that is truly great!

The model or ideal student is one, then, who senses (and grows in this sensation) that he or she functions and lives with and for Christ Jesus wherever he or she happens to be at the moment. The student is aware that he can continue to serve Christ even apart from the home congregation, be active and abound in the work of the Lord in the kingdom at large, also through campus ministry. Christian students realize further that when they graduate from college and move into a career, their role in the kingdom does not decrease or change. Just the location changes.

The student is one who is eager to serve the Lord through the campus ministry. Having been on the receiving end of teaching and doing by others for so long, he is now looking for outlets to the faith and energy and abilities God has given him. This is in keeping with the eternal design of God for man: “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Eph 2:10). It is in keeping with the purpose for which Christ redeemed us, “to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good” (Tit 2:14). The Greek for “eager to do” is “*zelotes*”—zealots for the work of the Lord. Any campus pastor who has been around even just a short time can name a number of young Christians who are “zealous”: enthusiastic for the work of the Lord.

The ideal student will be perceptive to what is going on around him, and this from a spiritual viewpoint. He will be able to discern truth from error (Mt 7:15). He will “smell a rat” when certain groups come in the guise of Christianity but seek rather to exploit him (1 Jn 4:1ff; Mt 10:16). He knows the Word of truth and is able to “correctly handle” it (2 Tm 2:15). He recognizes that some religious groups and individuals on campus are involved in “quarreling about words” and “godless chatter” (2 Tm 2:14-15) and avoids them. He understands that although “many are doing it” or “many agree with it” when it comes to the lifestyles and prevailing thoughts and ideals on campuses today, majority doesn’t make it either true or right. Final judgment still rests on “What does God say about this?” For by his Word we will be judged (Jn 12:48). Here the spirit of Elijah as he confronted the prophets of Baal and the non-committal crowds shines as the example for our young people, yes, all of us (1 Kgs 18:16ff).

The model student in our campus ministries is one who perceives that all education, careers and other parts of human life that still lie ahead are temporary in nature. They last only for a lifetime. The student is one who says “our citizenship is in heaven, and we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ” (Php 3:20).

The model student will also properly evaluate many of the world’s so-called “noble ventures.” Much of the wise philosophy that underlies his day-to-day studies in the classroom and library and lecture hall, many of the people that are held up as heroes to this present generation, no matter how fine-sounding or good-looking, are described in Scripture as “enemies of the cross of Christ” (Php 3:18). The Christian student will be aware that in Christ “are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col 2:3).

At the same time he will be able to enjoy life and know how to have fun. He realizes that God “richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment” (1 Tm 6:17) and that being full of joy is in keeping with the Spirit of Christ (Lk 10:21). Our students ought to realize that there is nothing wrong with a good time, especially among Christian friends.

The model student is one who is honest with himself, realistic about himself, his faith and spiritual condition. “Students (on college campuses) are sick and tired of hypocrisy,” the *US News and World Report* has noted. Most of all a student must be honest with himself about his own sinfulness, about repentance and about the need to stay close to the Savior through faith that is strengthened constantly by the means of grace (Ro 3:23; Ro 8; Mt 11:28, e.g.).

And finally, our ideal student is one who learns by doing. The student does not really learn unless he gets involved, unless he tries and at times fails. Then he can learn from his mistakes and keep trying.

It is the job of campus pastors to help all their Christian students strive toward these ideals. While we may know of few students in our campus ministries who are right now the “ideal student,” we should be able to think of many who are eager to get involved in multiplying the ministry at hand. They are waiting for us to

provide the lead, giving them a structure to work in and training and advice along the way as they work at it. If these college students in our campus ministry are allowed to play their role in the work of the Kingdom, then the future of our church is not bleak by any means. It remains bright, even in these last days.

2. THE REAL STUDENT

Just what are the concerns of today's Christian students? What do they consider the important issues in their lives? What are their weaknesses? Their strengths? What do they think about their Synod? About the campus ministry? These are some of the issues we'll deal with in this section. If we are to work effectively with our students, we will want to know as much about them as possible.

The following information is based largely on an informal session conducted with about seventy active WELS students.

Students and God

When asked what issue confronts them most strongly in college, most students mentioned academic problems (grades, professors, etc.) or career choices (what to do with my life). Many are also concerned about dating and sharing their faith with non-Lutherans; dealing with sexuality in God pleasing ways is another cause for much worry. Moreover, many students are troubled by guilt feelings related to sin in general or specific sins.

Doubts and questions about the Bible do not loom so large in our students' minds. Concerns about drugs, money, church membership were far down the list. And, as might be expected, our young people do not give much thought to death.

It is reassuring to know that our students are almost unanimous in believing that the God of Scripture is the one true God, that he loves and forgives sinners, and that Scripture is inspired and inerrant. Sad to say, however, a good many of them are not regular Bible readers. And many admit to seldom or never "sharing" Christ with others.

When asked what they find "most difficult to understand about God," students most frequently mentioned his forgiveness: even in the face of continual sinning. Indeed, this indicates that our young people have a deep awareness of God's law and their sinfulness. Others are troubled that God does not seem to be there when they need him; the fact that the ungodly often seem to fare better than the godly also is difficult to understand. These concerns, of course, are the same things that troubled Job.

Students and WELS

Our students seem to look at their church with the same honesty they examine their own lives. They perceive in the Wisconsin Synod both strengths and weaknesses.

Students greatly appreciate our Synod's faithfulness to the Scriptures and its uncompromising doctrinal stand. One student described the greatest strength of WELS as "the fact that it continues to faithfully follow the Bible when more and more religions are falling away." Or in the words of two other students: "It's not 'wishy-washy'" and "They (i.e. the Synod) tell the truth about God."

On the other hand, students find fault with their synod in several areas. They want to see more work being done among teens and young adults. They also feel that the Synod could do more to share the truth with outsiders—both through a more extensive public relations program and through more "one-to-one" sharing of the gospel. Some criticize what they see as an elitist attitude in the church: "we're the only true church, the only ones to be saved." Others detect legalism and a lack of love in the WELS.

A number of these criticisms of the Synod can be traced back to its strong stand on fellowship. Our position toward other church bodies is often misunderstood—both outside of and within WELS. Pastors should make every effort to instruct their people thoroughly in regard to fellowship.

What, then, do students perceive as the greatest need in WELS? Opinions vary widely. Many are interested in more Bible study, with emphasis on discussion rather than “spoon-feeding” by the pastor. One student summed up a concern of many others when he wrote: “WELS needs to lose the elitist image it has without compromising its religious convictions.” Training in personal evangelism is perceived as yet another need: “(We need) programs to train people how to witness instead of just sermons telling them to do it.” And, of course, those who sense a coldness and legalism, see the need for “a lot more love.”

In spite of their criticisms, most of our more active students see themselves as “totally committed for life” to their Synod. In other words, the campus minister has a core of dedicated, yet frank, young people with which to work.

Students and the Campus Ministry

Many WELS students are unacquainted with the Synod’s national program. Those who are familiar with it appreciate the ministry by mail, especially the *Meditations* booklets. Students also speak highly of the spring national rally.

On the local level, students would like to see more outreach. That is, they want the local campus ministry to try to reach the unchurched on campus as well as inactive Wisconsin Synod students. Of all aspects of the campus ministry, worship services are most appreciated. Bible study programs are a distant second.

What do students think of their campus pastors? Since this question intimately affects our ministry we’ll go into more detail concerning student opinions here. On the positive side, students think of campus pastors as understanding and having a genuine concern for young people. Many look at their pastors as friendly and approachable. They like the fact that ministers are available “at any time.” “Innovative” and “creative” (especially in worship) were adjectives used to describe campus pastors.

When asked to criticize, however, students came up with a much longer list. While this emphasis on the negative might merely reflect the human tendency to find fault, we will want to consider it as a channel through which we can improve our ministry.

Some criticize their pastor for having too little time for the campus ministry. This may be due to spending too much time on inessentials (such as cleaning the campus house) and trying to do too much by himself. Or, in the opinion of some students, it may simply be due to lack of interest.

The pastor’s teaching ministry comes under fire on several counts. Ministers are accused of being boring (“too much seminary talk”), too repetitive, and nervous before the group. Pastors are said to stifle group discussion and to be afraid to admit at times “I don’t know.” They often lack understanding of other religions and tend to nit-pick rather than present a fair analysis. One student saw his pastor as “fearing to stress Bible message because he didn’t think students would want to hear it.”

Other criticisms covered a wide variety of areas: pressuring students to attend meetings, lack of seriousness, inability to communicate, demeaning attitude toward women, making students feel guilty for not bringing others to church (without offering suggestions as to how to go about it), acting as though Christians don’t have problems or encounter temptations. One student’s criticism was quite general, yet perhaps very astute: “lack of knowing what he (the pastor) wants to accomplish.”

Campus pastors will want to consider these concerns. Whether valid or not, they are criticisms which at least some students have of some pastors. Should we see such faults in ourselves the best advice might be: if the shoe fits, take it off and put on a better one.

In describing what he looked for in a campus minister, one student probably summarized the feelings of many others: “The students are their (campus pastors’) main concern. It is an important time in the life of a college student. Be someone they can share many things with. A campus pastor should be a friend, not someone who points out all the evil. We are Christians; we should work together.” Whether we agree with everything this student said (or the way he worded it), we certainly would not argue with the last statement. Indeed, “we should work together.” And that brings us to our next topic: preparing students for service.

3. PREPARING STUDENTS FOR SERVICE (Part I)

We are agreed that we want college students to take an active role in the priesthood of all believers. We desire to train our students to lead Bible studies, worship opportunities, outreach efforts and fellowship activities. We want to train our students to plan, administer, coordinate and execute the program of campus ministry from which they are benefiting. The goal of ministry elsewhere (to develop an indigenous church, to make the pastor dispensable, not indispensable) is still our goal, although, realistically, it may never be reached on the campus because of the high turnover in personnel and the constantly changing character of the campus.

Although we may agree that such lofty goals are worthy, our experience in campus ministry may temper such idealism. Not only is the “congregation” involved in campus ministry experiencing high turnover, but many of the key leaders in our campus congregation may be victims of the computerized scheduling of classes at unorthodox, fluctuating times from one quarter to the next. Students who were available for noon-hour Bible classes one quarter may not be available until 10 p.m. the next. Students who could make calls on new students one quarter may be harassed by laboratory schedules or internships which allow no time for extra-curricular activities. It is true that people in established congregations also face such fluctuations in their schedules, but on a large campus, a greater percentage of our “congregation” is likely to be vulnerable to such shifts of schedule than we might expect in an average community parish.

This reality of campus life can be frustrating to the campus pastor who has spent hours training a student to lead some aspect of the campus ministry, only to find that his schedule does not allow him (or her) to be involved. Couple this Scylla with the Charybdis of a part-time campus pastor who must sandwich campus ministry training sessions in between rather rigid congregational schedules (where he is primarily called) and you have the ingredients for a plopp-plopp-fizz-fizz candid camera commercial. Except for two campuses in our Synod, all of our campus pastors conduct their campus ministries part-time, with varying degrees of congregational approval, which may range anywhere between benign consent to jealous surveillance.

It may appear more efficient simply to carry out the campus ministry single-handedly rather than expend the time training students to oversee aspects of the work. Rare are the students who can simply take an aspect of the campus ministry and handle it for the campus pastor without some guidance, consultation, and time-consuming interaction. There are students like that on some of our campuses, and in such cases, the best method of training them may occur accidentally, as the part-time campus pastor is so swamped by other concerns that he doesn't develop an area of campus work. The impatient, efficient, capable student, out of sheer frustration for the lack of that campus activity, takes the bull by the horns, reads what he has to read, trains himself and organizes that aspect of campus ministry. The intelligent campus pastor, instead of chastising the student for brash precociousness, would then monitor that aspect of the program and establish with the self-trained student the chain of command for overseeing the orthodoxy of the effort. Therefore, one potential answer to the question, “How can we best train our students for meaningful involvement in campus ministry?” would be: do nothing! The gospel-motivated, spiritually-mature students who are frustrated with the inactivity and non-existent ministry will jump into the breach, train themselves and develop the ministry best suited to their needs and their campus.

Yet we are called into campus ministry to train students for involvement not by default but by intent. With this in mind, we shall consider some ways of training students for more active involvement and leadership in our campus ministry. Let's take a look at five basic areas where students could be involved in a meaningful way: 1) *Bible study*, 2) *worship*, 3) *evangelism*, 4) *recreation*, 5) *administration*.

Bible Study

One of the fears we have which prevents us from turning our lay people loose to teach Bible classes is that they will inadvertently teach false doctrine. We may know of congregations and ministries which were disrupted by zealous, misguided lay people who gathered for Bible study without the supervision of a pastor. Consequently we carry with us a brooding suspicion that anytime a lay person leads a Bible class we are

“asking for it.” It might seem easier, safer and less threatening to keep our lay people spiritual babes, receiving their nourishment strained through our theological sieves. All too often Christian education in our circles means producing in our congregations perpetual Bible students, not Bible teachers.

At first blush, these statements may sound a bit extreme, but all we have to do is survey our congregations and campus ministries and ask how many adult Bible classes are being taught by lay people. We trust them to teach the Bible to youngsters (who can ask profoundly stumping questions theologically!), and risk their heresies in the classrooms of these impressionable children, but we do not actively recruit our lay people to teach Bible classes for adults. Yet, many of these lay adults are professional teachers in other fields, spiritually as mature as their pastors, consecrated, devout, and every bit as able to read Kretzmann, Rupprecht, Lenski, and Luther as their pastors. In fact, because they are not trained preachers, they might even have more interesting ways to lead a Bible class than their pastors.

What are we doing to train our college students (the educated, highly literate, potential future teachers in our congregations) to study the Scriptures responsibly even when a pastor is not there to hold their spiritual hand? Even where the pastor leads the Bible study, he can give strong clues to the students how they can be teachers of the Bible when he may not be around. First, he can bring along the commentaries he uses to prepare for the Bible class and freely admit which ones he consults. Better still, he can bring them to the study and assign each student a different commentary and challenge the students to compare the comments and evaluate them. This means the Bible class will “cover less ground” but over the long haul the class will learn how to study the Bible responsibly.

Secondly, instead of preparing worksheets on which he has listed all of the cross-references and Bible passages pertinent to the study, he could require the students to develop their own list in the course of the class by using their cross-referenced Bibles, concordances, Bible dictionaries, and so on. Again, this means the class will not be told what the right passages are to consult, nor will they be given the scriptural argument in a pre-packaged, easily digestible outline. Some of the students who are used to being spoon-fed in Bible classes may resent the campus pastor’s requiring them to do the kind of thinking required of them in the rest of their university classes. They may have come to Bible class for an intellectual slumber party where the discoveries were served on a pastoral hors d’oeuvre tray ready to swallow. They may resist a do-it-yourself party where they are expected to help prepare the meal. But, if our goal is to train them to study the Bible and find their answers from the Word, not from men, then we are obligated to shatter their stereotypes, pop their illusions and bring them to the real world of adult Bible study, not recycled Sunday school instruction. If our goal is to train students to study their Bibles intelligently even when we cannot be with them, then this is one method of modeling an approach they can copy.

Why not teach students to challenge the glib interpretations of commentators especially when there is an obvious difference of opinion among commentators? How many of us campus pastors encourage (not just tolerate) our students to challenge our conclusions, to question our opinions on what a Bible passage means? The way we conduct our Bible classes may be one of the most important ways of training students to conduct their own Bible studies, so that if some hot-shot errorist strolls into their discussion, they will have the spiritual acumen to test what he declares to be the “obvious” meaning of the text.

Another way to train students to lead Bible study requires taking the time to sit down with key potential leaders and work through a section with them the way we prepare it for our Bible classes. This makes us very transparent, of course, if we have been shaking Bible classes out of our sleeves without any restudying of the text or by simply copying an outline from Lenski or some other favorite resource. We may have to admit that our own preparation for Bible classes has been shallow, one-dimensional, and not as steeped in the study of the Greek and Hebrew as our cribbed quotations from Lenski, Leupold, Edersheim or Pieper might suggest. Even more reprehensible is stealing copyrighted material from study guides and passing it off as our own sweat and blood. All too many of us might have to admit that we have “borrowed” such material without properly footnoting it for our students. What the law calls plagiarism some teachers prefer to call “research.”

In summary, then, training our students to be more meaningfully involved in Bible study, in a leadership capacity, means risking mistakes. Without the willingness to risk the occasional mistakes a student leader might

make, we also fail to discover the exhilarating potential of our students. We don't have to toss them into a sea of theological confusion without any guidance; that would be irresponsible. But the more transparent we make ourselves, so they can see how we approach Scripture, reason our way through to our conclusions from Scripture, wrestle with the questions we have to ask to come up with the answers we share, the better are the chances they will learn an approach to the Bible which they can use even when we are not around. Then, of course, we have to nudge them out of the spiritual nest and let them fly solo. If we are going to monitor their discussions, we will have to resist the temptation to be the oracle of theological wisdom perched in the corner of the room.

If we have responsible students who have the time to use the helps we use to prepare the Bible study ahead of time, we will choose that avenue of training. If student schedules do not allow for that much advance preparation, we may adopt the "research it together" approach suggested above. If, on the other hand, we have a flare for exciting, informative lecturing, we might decide to unload all that we can learn on our students in stimulating lectures and then structure discussion questions for them to explore in small or large groups. This latter approach may be very beneficial for the majority of the students, informative and exciting, but only a few will have the sagacity to emulate such an example when they have a chance to lead Bible study for themselves or for others. If our goal is to train, we must do more.

Worship

We hope the students involved in campus ministry will someday lead devotions in the families they have. We hope they will serve on worship committees in the congregations they will eventually join wherever they establish their residence. We hope they will help lead devotions for young people's groups, as camp directors at Christian camps of our fellowship, as pioneer leaders, and as congregational society officers. The campus ministry is an excellent arena in which they can learn what it takes to structure a worship opportunity for the family of God.

One way to train them to structure such worship opportunities is to involve them in sub-committees to plan the campus worship service. Some can serve on a hymn committee, selecting either hymns from our hymnal or acceptable, scripturally accurate contemporary hymns. Others can help formulate a confession of sins which really speaks from student hearts. Others can formulate prayers of thanksgiving, intercession, special needs. If given the theme of the service, they can even use their concordances to locate appropriate auxiliary psalms for the group to use, coordinated scripture readings, hymn verses which give an exposition on the text at the center of the devotional pause.

As students help shape their own worship services on campus, they will learn a multitude of lessons about corporate worship. They will learn to consider the worship needs of people who prefer King James English as well as those who prefer modern English. They will learn to balance the needs of those who find traditional hymns communicative with the needs of those who need more contemporary expressions of their faith. They will perceive that corporate worship, properly structured, attempts to incorporate the needs of the whole family of God. It does not impose the pastor's preferences on the people to whom he has been called. It does not assume that everyone who worships finds the same forms equally as meaningful.

Such a training approach requires a campus pastor who is willing to allow young Christians the full range of Christian freedom in their worship life permitted by Holy Scripture. It means allowing them to choose forms of worship which may not always be the pastor's favorite but which do serve the worship needs of his students. It means encouraging students to create new hymns, just as our forefathers created new expressions of their faith. It will, no doubt, require time explaining to students who do not understand adiaphora that some other students' desire for new forms is to be respected. They may need to be trained to understand that simply because a form of worship is different from what they experienced at home, it is not automatically "bad" or "wrong." On the other hand, students who prefer new forms are also to be reminded that the needs of those preferring traditional forms should be deeply respected. Frank, calm group discussions of what needs each person in the group has for meaningful worship can open rich opportunities for students to grow in their concern

for all members of the worshipping congregation. Love is a two-way street, requiring understanding and empathy not just from the innovative but also from those who don't want to change what they have always used.

There are many Lutheran Christians who would die of apoplexy if asked to open a congregational meeting or society meeting with prayer. We have not successfully trained our people to pray aloud, except to recite common table prayers and the liturgical responses. It is regrettable that many church members have the notion that only a pastor can open an elders' meeting, ladies guild meeting or boy pioneer devotion with prayer. He becomes the equivalent of a Gentile cantor, hired to pray for us.

There are a number of ways in the campus ministry in which a pastor can train his students to be more comfortable with praying aloud. To say the least, it would be rather inconsiderate suddenly to drop something on them like a bomb, with an obtuse introduction like: "Let's all hold hands and take turns adding a thought or two to our prayer tonight!" Since this practice is so uncommon in our circles, the campus pastor would need to prepare the students properly for it and freely grant those who never feel comfortable doing it the right to refrain.

One simple introduction to the concept of students participating in a prayer would be to ask for volunteers before the devotion, and arrange them in a prescribed order so there would be no confusion or awkwardness. At informal devotional get-togethers, such an approach is comfortable and natural, and yet it allows those who prefer simply to listen their freedom to listen. In formal worship services of the campus ministry, such a participatory prayer might be deemed incongruous and disorderly. But in the informal setting of a retreat, midweek classroom devotion, or other such surrounding, students might learn with great relief that they can talk to their God aloud as comfortably as they talk to their campus pastor.

If the group is sitting in a circle, the pastor might suggest that he start the prayer and that each person wishing to add a thought to the prayer may do so in turn. If anyone prefers not to add a thought, he can simply tap the person next to him to signal that it is his turn. Participants can be reminded that their prayers are not being graded, and that if someone ahead of them offers the same thought they were planning to add, God doesn't mind the duplication. If they have to stop in the middle of a sentence and start over, God doesn't mind that either. The campus pastor will find his own prayer life enriched as he trains his students to contribute to the prayer life of the group.

There is an occupational risk in training students to take such an active role in their own worship life. They may feel justifiably disappointed when a campus pastor organizes his Sunday morning services with a minimum of thought and sensitivity to the needs of his people, reading lifeless prayers conveniently snatched from a prayer book, selecting hymns without any obvious relevance to the thread of the service, or failing even to have a thread that holds the service together. In training his students, the campus pastor will be involved in constantly re-training himself to the exhilarating privilege of shaping a worship service that is truly to the glory of God, inspiring and edifying for God's people and expressive of the full measure of our faith.

Evangelism

It has become popular for our Lutheran Collegians to pile into vehicles at vacation breaks and charge off to exotic locations far from their campus residences to canvass-witness. They may speak glowingly of the experiences they had. The missions they help may record stunning results from their efforts. But how is their life on campus any more expressive of the Christian faith after that exhilarating experience than before? It seems that our campus ministries generally appear to be primarily soul conservation reservoirs, havens of refuge, where outsiders can stroll in if they see an ad that intrigues them or if they mistake it for the "other Lutheran" ministry on campus. It is almost as if we view soul conservation and soul winning as alternatives between which we must choose. How can we train our students who are conserved on campus to serve on campus as ambassadors for Christ? How can we train our groups of students to reach outside their group to the confused student, the cynical student and the doubter?

One way is to develop such a whiz-bang program of Bible study that our students will enthusiastically invite fellow students to share it, the way they would invite them to an exciting movie they had seen once and

want to go back and see again. In that approach, we train our students to invite friends to the campus ministry opportunities. Students who have been warned about unionism may not understand how to invite students of other denominational backgrounds to their fellowship of Wisconsin Synod students without compromising our fellowship principles. The group itself may freeze up when “an outsider” comes in who doesn’t understand their groupy jokes, their churchy jargon, or their convictions. Some might even view such a guest as an intruder who is rocking the boat of their assembly in the safe, pure harbor of like-mindedness. They may feel reluctant to sing out boldly on their hymns when a guest sits next to them refusing to sing and curiously wrinkling his brow from time to time when the pastor affirms beliefs he has not yet appropriated. Yet, in such a setting, our collegians have an opportunity to witness to the validity of their convictions and the depth of their faith as well as the sincerity of their worship.

A campus pastor may need regularly to review with the group what their two-pronged *raison d’etre* is: soul conservation of the saved and outreach on the campus to the unsaved. Publicizing the worship services and midweek devotions of the group in campus newspapers may attract visitors, especially if the gatherings are held in public buildings on campus. Is the group unashamedly willing to share Christ with the campus world? Or are they simply content to spread the word through the grape-vine when they will assemble in their twentieth century catacombs, safe from the intrusion of drop-in guests who are not carbon copies of themselves?

The campus pastor trains his collegians to think of outreach by reaching out himself, aggressively advertising his presence and his program all over campus. He also models the outreach mentality by making himself accessible on campus. But more than this role-model of accessibility, his willingness to show his students how to talk about the Savior with their friends can train them to share their faith, too.

He might offer a series of training workshops on how to share their faith with friends and strangers, coupled with actual practice. A whole weekend retreat followed up by specific targets which the students set for themselves on campus could also facilitate more openness among our students with the gospel.

The campus pastor may train his students to man an information booth by supplying them with a multitude of useful gospel tracts at high density areas on campus. Some pastors and students avoid such visible appearance on campus for fear of being associated with religious groups whose stereotypes they do not want to endure. If we pursue such thinking to its ultimate conclusion, we would avoid any activity sponsored by another religious group and end up abandoning most of the gospel imperatives laid on us by Christ!

In some ways, sidewalk evangelism is easier on a large campus than a small one. The chance of running into dormitory friends is less than on a small campus. For the beginning witness, the dread of having to talk to someone whom he knows is much more paralyzing than to talk to total strangers. The pastor can take his recruits through a training session, role play different passers-by in the safety of the workshop, and then go out with them on the sidewalk with gospel tracts and specific invitations to campus ministry events.

The greatest mission field for evangelism on a large campus are the W.E.L.S. students whose names the campus pastor receives but who never respond to any mailings. It would be a convenient training program to take active students in the campus ministry along on calls to these inactive referrals. Using the TAS outline, the pastor could demonstrate to the active student how to review the law and gospel with the other student and urge him to join the campus ministry program. Progressively, the student takes a larger and larger part in the presentation until he can conduct the entire conversation with such a student. It is a time-consuming training process, but it offers great potential for reaching many more students of our fellowship than if the pastor tried to call on them by himself. The long-range benefit is the training of a future evangelist for some congregation where the trained student eventually settles down.

Recreation

Students know better than the campus pastor what they like to do. The campus pastor does not have to be a social director or entertainment genius. The pastor may have to discuss with the group what the goals of their recreation and social activities are. Sometimes, groups claim they are planning “fellowship” when their choice of activity only threatens the feeling of fellowship by excluding some people who cannot participate

because of handicaps or limitations. Rollerskating, horseback riding and volleyball are great for people who like to roller-skate, ride horses and play volleyball, or watch others roller-skate, ride horses and play volleyball.

But what about the person who cannot do such active activities? Do the leaders take this person's interests into consideration when planning other activities? The campus pastor may have to sit down with the planners and ask them to consider if some of their planned recreation which they enjoy so much may appear childish to other college students. They might not have felt that way because they have been doing it for so long they just assumed everyone would enjoy doing it. The campus pastor should not abandon the students entirely in their planning social events, at least not in the early stages of their planning year. The pastor has a longer view of the campus ministry than most students. He may be aware of factions which the planning group may not recognize. He may have to take the time in the early meetings to be there to keep reminding them of their goal, requiring them to define it clearly in the context of a Christian campus ministry and then to justify their choices in the context of their agreed upon goals. As he perceives the students' growth in perception, he can phase himself out more and more, as he becomes confident that they are considering their own goals as a group when choosing their social activities.

The pastor must be willing to let go. The campus pastor who never trusts his students to make sound judgments and good choices fails to train them to think for themselves and answer for their own mistakes. The training process includes letting students make mistakes, poor judgments and bad decisions. But more. The campus pastor is there when they do make mistakes to help them see that it is not the end of the world, that out of the ashes of a disaster arise new lessons for the future. If the campus pastor is so insecure that he can't brook failure, and so uncertain of his role in the training process that he takes the students' failures as his own, he will never be able to let go enough to allow them to grow enough to complete the training process. The only real test of successful training is the solo flight. The flight instructor who insists on continuing to ride with the student pilot never allows the student to graduate to the next level of training.

Part of his training of students to plan their own social activities involves raising the questions they should consider when planning their events. They may need to be reminded that what they choose to do socially is not to contradict their Christian witness. They may have to be reminded that since they function as a group under the Wisconsin Synod, they represent the Synod in many people's eyes. They should be trained to ask what impact their social activities will have on the image of their campus ministry on the campus and beyond the campus. Would it be advisable to forego a planned activity which might cause undue confusion and controversy? On the other hand, they ought to be trained to recognize the freedom they have as Christians under grace. They should not be easily intimidated with reckless threats that their activity is going to "cause offense" when in truth it is merely going to upset some people, surprise some people, or require some other Christians to be tolerant of an activity they would not enjoy but which in and of itself is not sinful or in bad taste. Sometimes, our campus pastors may have failed to train students to practice their Christian freedom and instead trained them to cower before uninformed or imagined opposition. It has been said before, but it bears repeating: training students for meaningful involvement in the campus ministry requires taking the risk that they might make some mistakes.

Administration

Much of what has been said under the other sections pertains to the administration of the campus ministry. Effective leadership is built of three essential components: a clear perception of valid goals for the group, adequate and constant feedback between leaders and followers, and understanding of the program chosen to meet the goals of the group.

The campus pastor who wants to train his students to administer more and more of their campus ministry must be willing to expend hours sitting with them. He must take the time to help students evaluate their goals, define them, and decide how to communicate these goals to the people to be affected by campus ministry. He must also help students determine how to get adequate feedback from the intended targets of campus ministry, re-evaluate goals, choose a program that will meet those goals, ask the questions that need to be asked

to implement the program, evaluate the program to determine if indeed it is meeting the goals, and revise the program when necessary.

Some students have had a great deal of leadership training from other experiences. They are sensitive, bright and persuasive. Others may require more personal attention from the campus pastor for developing their leadership perceptions, their communication skills, and their organizational procedures. It may seem at times that as soon as the campus pastor gets some leaders trained, they graduate and leave. If he doesn't see his role as part of the larger context of the church, the campus pastor may grow discouraged and depressed. If he thinks of his campus ministry in parish ministry terms, he may be perennially frustrated. But if he regards his campus ministry as a dispatch center, training recruits for positions in the field, he won't view the time spent training them as wasted when they push on to other locations. His task is to influence them with the Word. Then when they leave his ministry they will be fuller, better equipped and stronger Christians.

There is no short-cut for training students to be thorough planners except to thoroughly plan with them, evaluate their plans, examine their activities after they have occurred and revise blueprints for future events on the basis of past and present observations. Of all the areas, this is the one where it is most tempting just to "do it yourself and do it right." In the process, the campus pastor may shape a very efficient, neat program which will reflect on him very favorably. The students might respect his genius and creativity, his detailed preparations and his insights. Yet they might never be able to duplicate it or anything close to it themselves. He may be viewed as a very successful campus pastor, but at the same time failed to multiply those who can offer ministry to others. In this way a great success might in one very critical aspect be a profound failure.

4. PREPARING STUDENTS FOR SERVICE (Part II)

Attitude Shaping

A young businessman was killed in an automobile accident. His widow was left with several small children to raise and her elderly mother to care for. Over the years, the widow devoted herself wholeheartedly and lovingly to the task. She nursed her mother through a long terminal illness. She supported and guided her children through adolescence and the teens. All five of her children became college graduates and set out on their own. Seemingly, all was well, yet the mother said, "For so long I had wanted to be out from under all these responsibilities and now I am free. But, for the life of me, I cannot figure out what I am free for."

Many of our college age young people have this same attitude. They want to be free. But when they have their freedom, they don't know just what to do with it.

How are we going to shape the right kind of attitude among students, so they will use their freedom for the glory of their God? The only proper way to shape attitudes or motivate the Christian is with the Word of God. The first step then in attitude-shaping for meaningful involvement in campus ministry is Bible Study. It is interesting to note that we are not the only people who think this way. Other groups on campus start at the same place, for example the Navigators and Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. Both begin with Bible study.

There are many places to begin in motivating Christian college students through Bible study. One of the best is a detailed study of heaven and hell. When the college student realizes that the person sitting along side of him or her in class is indeed going to hell, while he on the other hand is destined for the glories of heaven, it does something to that student. It wakes him up to the realities of life and death and what his Christianity is really all about.

The second step in attitude shaping is an in-depth study of 1 Peter 2:4-10. This passage answers the question, "Who am I?" I am a special person chosen by God. I am a living stone in God's Temple. I am a royal priest, a member of an holy nation and a person who belongs to God. I am one who has been called to declare the praises of him who has called me out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Another, related, question we want to lead our students to answer is, "Why am I here?" It is not an accident that I happen to attend this particular university. God put me here. I am here to use my talents for

furthering my education. But I am also here as a representative of the King. There are many sections of Scripture a person can use to answer the question, “Why am I here?”.

As part of a continuing program of attitude shaping it is important to stress an ongoing Bible study program, church attendance, attendance at the Lord’s Supper and attendance at two weekly Bible classes. Campus pastors might want to develop a four-year plan for Bible study. Such a program would enable them to cover basic doctrines and important issues without any repetition during the average student’s stay on campus.

A final step in attitude shaping which is very helpful is to integrate students into the congregational life. Congregations near campuses might want to develop a “sponsor program” in which families of the congregation “adopt” a collegian for his years on campus. In cases where this has been tried, it has been very effective. Collegians really appreciate the chance to get out of the school setting and into a home setting. By means of such a program collegians come in contact with dedicated Christians and have an ongoing example to follow. There is much truth to the saying that “most attitudes are caught rather than taught.” A sponsor program helps students catch the right attitude.

Skill Developing

Much of the student’s training has been covered in the study of Scripture. But that is not the end. We will want our Christian students to develop skills in two special areas: conservation and campus outreach. A conservation program deals with personal contact with other WELS students on campus. Training might include some form of the Talk About the Savior program.

An outreach program could include general evangelism, small Bible study groups and newsletter contacts. Student training programs in these areas can be integrated into a congregational training program.

The type of training depends not only on the size of the campus, but perhaps even more on the size of the congregation which the campus pastor is serving. Much can be done by integrating the students into the congregation. This is especially true where a pastor serves a larger congregation. But there is a positive benefit for any size congregation. We are training future workers in Christ’s kingdom who soon will leave the campus and enter the mainstream of life. They will then serve their Lord in the congregation.

Working in a Small, Part-time Ministry

The following report is very specific. It recounts experiences from one small part-time campus ministry. The number of students is small as is the size of the congregation involved. Although no two ministries are exactly the same, many campus pastors will probably see reflections of their own situations here. Certainly all can find some insights and ideas for their ministries.

The students of our ministry are trained through their participation in and with the congregation. They learn and grow by the things they add to the congregation and by the things they receive from the congregation.

The students are active in our regular Sunday morning Bible class. They make up our entire choir, our soloists and substitute organists. They are the best evangelism workers in the congregation, bringing roommates and friends to Sunday morning and special services as well as collegians’ meetings.

Two years ago, during his last semester, a student, one of our members, was elected to be the president of the congregation. His youth added some energy to the church council, and has served to make the new and younger members of the congregation active together with the older ones. His re-election this year indicates that the congregation is well pleased with his leadership. The congregation has confidence in the youth of the church; and the youth of the church are willing to use their energy to serve their church.

Several years ago, the council voted not to have midweek Advent or Lenten services. When this was discussed at a collegians’ meeting they were disappointed and asked if the council might not reconsider their decision. They enjoyed the midweek worship services, and they felt that it was much easier to bring friends to church on a Wednesday evening than a Sunday morning. Their opinion was brought back to the council, and on

another vote the midweek services were approved. The students learned two things from this experience: first, that their opinions matter; and secondly, that church councils do act on what the members suggest.

In addition to what the students have added to our congregation they have also received from the congregation.

One Sunday after church two students asked the pastor if he thought they would be too forward if they invited themselves to one of the member's home, to use her oven to bake cookies and to get to know her better. The woman is also our organist. She was always kind to the girls and occasionally sat with them during Bible class, but they never got to really know her. They did invite themselves and started a good friendship which resulted in the three of them combining their music talents for special music in our services.

Other members also have invited the students to their homes after church on Sunday or during the week for a "good home-cooked meal." Of course, college girls are good babysitters, and some of the members have been hiring them to watch their children. This may sound like so much prattle, but you can see how it unites the students with our congregational family, and teaches them of a practical ministry of love and concern among fellow Christians.

Of the adult confirmations in the last two years, two of the confirmands were students, and one was the wife of a student.

Although our students have exceptionally close ties with the congregation, in many ways they are no different than the students of larger ministries. Therefore it is necessary to meet some of their specific needs during their college years. These special needs are probably best met through the special collegians' organization.

Our spiritual studies at collegians' meetings are usually topical studies, carried out on the living room floor. They usually lead to some off the subject discussions of great importance to the students' present concerns.

Our students primary interest seems to be, "How do I talk to my friends about my faith?" Several weeks ago we discussed those students who, since they've moved away from home have decided that they don't need to go to church anymore. Without a script the students did some role playing, and then role reversal, discussing the reasons why certain students would choose not to continue their spiritual life while they were at school. The result was a decision by the students to face up to their roommates and encourage them to get into the habit of attending church again. We also talked about how we can serve such students with the printed word, open invitations, frank discussions and an example of Christian living.

The results of our collegians' program this far have been pleasing. They have done service for the congregation as an organization. They have been responsible for banners, choir, and Advent wreaths, and they are now working on a puppet ministry for our Sunday School Activities Group. The puppet show will deal with children telling lies, and they will also be preparing a regular Sunday School story.

The students meet every other week at the church which is also the parsonage. Meeting at the parsonage gives us another unique opportunity to share an example of family life with the students. They have a chance to sit and watch television, to play table games, eat popcorn or whatever else, in a home, not a church basement. This gives the pastor's family an opportunity to show the students a comfortable Christian lifestyle. The price, however, is giving up some privacy for a few hours.

The informality of our group has its benefits but caution must also be employed. It is not conducive to establishing a professional relationship, but it builds up a relationship like that among friends. However, the professional position is never removed and a pastor must be aware of the dangers of speaking too lightly, or being a little too informal and by his words or actions setting up a stumbling block for faith, or losing a student's confidence.

As with the rest of the congregation, a pastor must be "all things to all people," when dealing with individual students. He must show interest in their interests. That may be, hog farming or saddlebreds, ROTC, drama workshops, political science, physical therapy, psychology or genetics, heavy rock or classical music. A pastor listens to what his members are interested in; he must also listen to what his students are interested in. In

a part-time student ministry it may be difficult for a pastor to find the necessary time for his students, unless he regards his students as he does his members.

5. INVOLVING THE STUDENTS

In this section we'll take a look at five areas of student involvement: administration, evangelism, soul conservation, Bible study and worship. How can we best utilize our students? How can they—and the church at large—benefit the most from their involvement? We hope to answer such questions in the next few pages.

Administration

When we talk about administration we are dealing first of all with aims and objectives, purpose and goals. Students involved in campus ministry should have no doubt about the purpose of that ministry. They should see themselves as serving their Savior. They should clearly understand that the campus ministry exists to nourish their faith and that of other believers. And there ought to be no question about the place of evangelism on the campus. With God's help, Christian students will witness to others and try to win them to the saving faith. Basic considerations? Of course these are. Yet it is concerning such basics that students must be sure. Otherwise a campus ministry will certainly veer off course.

Once the students in a campus ministry know where they are headed, they need to know how they will get there. It is now time to consider tools, planning and personnel. The tools are the means through which the work will be carried out. Again, it should be stressed that the gospel is at the center. But how do Christians on campus get the good word out? The most obvious tools for this are the worship services, Bible study gatherings and fellowship activities. These gatherings ought to be scheduled for the convenience of students (evening services, weekend retreats, etc.). And they certainly ought to be publicized. Letters to new students, a campus ministries newsletter, ads in the student newspaper, slide lectures for local Lutheran high school students and personal contact are all means of publicizing the ministry. We need not feel hesitant or embarrassed about publicity. After all, it is the Lord's work we are promoting!

Students themselves will be the personnel involved in these efforts. Depending on their abilities and schedules, they can share in every phase of the campus ministry from maintaining the student file, to typing letters and newsletters, to maintaining the financial records for retreats.

Before a pastor delegates such responsibilities to students, however, he himself must be convinced that student involvement is the best route to follow. Pastors have to resist the temptation to do it themselves.

Once pastors are ready for student involvement, they can go ahead and create such involvements. Here are four steps to that end: 1) Alert students to the very real need (and benefits) for their participation at the beginning (and throughout) each year. Be sure to furnish the scriptural motivation. 2) Acknowledge the fruits of their efforts. Point them out and publicly give credit to the faithful worker for them. When done properly, this will in no way detract from the honor we owe to God. Rather it will serve to glorify him. 3) Make an honest evaluation of each student and determine what he is capable of contributing. Neither underestimate (this leads to waste) nor overestimate (leads to frustration). 4) Identify student leaders. Use them to help find and involve other students. This is especially important in preparation for the next fall.

It is important to have an executive committee of students on each campus. Such a committee will work with the items described in this section: clarifying goals, setting up the "tools," doing the planning, and contacting and enlisting the personnel.

Evangelism

Jesus has given us the commission to make disciples of all nations. We are quick to point out that "all nations" includes infants as well as adults. It also includes college students. And one of the best ways to reach

students is through other students. Our Lutheran students know there is an alternative to the many worldly philosophies and false religions on campus. They will want to share God's Word of truth.

Perhaps the greatest blessing a campus ministry can leave with students is the ability to witness enthusiastically and effectively. Evangelism work gives Christian students an outlet to serve their God. And it brings to the unchurched the hope of everlasting life.

Before we talk about what to do, it would be well to know what not to do. Today there is a lot of high pressure evangelism taking place. But this was not the way of our Lord during his earthly ministry. We will certainly want to avoid a Jehovah's Witness foot-in-the-door approach. While we want our collegians to be known for their dedication and conviction, we wouldn't want them to be labeled as fanatics.

Under the heading of Administration, we have already discussed some means of publicizing campus activities. This, of course, is part of evangelism. Again we want to stress that the campus ministry is not some kind of secret, underground movement. It should not hesitate to make known its work. Students can easily take part in putting up postings or typing newspaper ads.

A more difficult means of witnessing is personal evangelism. While most students will hardly be capable of debating the local atheist Ph.D., they can be taught to share their faith in casual settings with other students. Campus pastors will be wise to offer periodic courses in evangelism. To this end, our Synod offers some fine materials. Nor should we neglect emphasizing to our students that their witness is only as good as the example set by their conduct.

Students who have some training and confidence in evangelism can get their feet wet in several ways. Handing out tracts is a start. This often involves answering questions from passers-by. Canvassing is another avenue which readily lends itself to a discussion of one's beliefs.

Student canvassing, however, need not be confined to the campus. The Travel-Canvass-Witness program has been a wonderful off-campus experience. Churches near colleges or universities may wish to enlist students to help in canvassing. This kind of joint church-campus ministry effort can be a wonderful blessing for all involved.

Soul Conservation

Not only can we involve students to witness to the unchurched, but we can also enlist them to contact other WELS students. Like evangelism this kind of work provides Christian young people with an outlet to serve their Lord. And like evangelism, it will benefit those who are reached through this ministry.

But effectiveness in this work, too, depends on training. Students who are going to call on fellow Lutherans will need to consider various factors. Can appointments be set up by phone? Should pairs of students do the visiting? Might it be wise to have students call on others from the same state or part of the state? The most important consideration, of course, is the purpose of those contacts. It is soul conservation. That is, it is designed to keep students close to their church and their Lord.

To this end every possible God-pleasing means should be employed. If supplied, religious preference cards should be checked. So should referrals from pastors, parents and the WELS Soul Conservation. Again, this is work that students can do.

It is important to contact new students immediately after they arrive on campus. Then they are most receptive and have not yet settled into a schedule which excludes worship and Bible study.

This can be one of the more frustrating areas of student involvement. Collegians can be less than enthused at the prospect of inviting others to worship. "If they were at all interested they would have come on their own." The indifference and even antagonism of those called upon often supports such hesitancy.

Yet it is worth the effort. Some will respond positively. Contacting fellow Wisconsin Synod Lutherans may even lead to other contacts outside our faith. In a word, it may open the door for evangelism opportunities.

On most campuses finding, contacting and inviting every WELS student is too big a job for just the pastor. Student involvement here is a must.

Bible Study

More important than how we study the Bible is what we aim to accomplish through our study. Pastors will strive for certain objectives in their Bible study courses. Following are seven goals we aim to reach through student Bible study: 1) Personal growth in faith, understanding, direction in life and ability to appropriate God's promises to life; 2) Desire and ability to use Scripture devotionally; 3) Growing confidence in Scripture and in their capacity to use Scripture in Christian witness and apologetics; 4) Addressing with Scripture the truths and issues of particular interest or controversy at their point in life and in their environment; 5) Greater familiarity with the structure and content of the Bible; 6) Appreciation for the truth that Christians instruct, encourage, comfort and admonish one another; 7) Developing the capability of leading Scripture study in home, Sunday school, youth group and other agencies of the church.

There are two basic methods of Bible study. The first is pastor-led. If he is going to conduct the class, the pastor will try to arrange it for a time and place convenient for the students. He should make sure the setting is comfortable. He should try to pick a subject that is relevant to the students. And, perhaps most important, he will try with God's help to bring the right attitude to his class. This means avoiding an air of condescension, while bringing a genuine interest in the students and their concerns. Preparedness is another must as is an openness to questions.

A pastor can use several methods to question students and stimulate discussion. Handouts with true-false, multiple choice or agree-disagree statements will get the students involved. Small "break-out groups" can also help to get everyone actively involved in discussing the topic at hand.

The second basic method of Bible study is student-led. Students with expertise in special areas can share it by participating in panel discussions or by leading a particular session.

Students may also lead small-group, on-campus Bible class courses. These students, of course, must be hand-picked. They should be equipped and their materials prepared well in advance of the class. As a follow-up, it would be advisable for the student leader to have "rehash" sessions with the pastor.

Student involvement at the leadership level is going to take time and patience. But as in other areas of involvement, the benefits outweigh the difficulties. As students are more involved in the Word, they are bound to grow spiritually. What a joy it will be for pastors as they see their ministry multiplied! And what a blessing for the entire church to have its future leaders so well grounded in the Word!

Worship

A campus ministry can afford a great variety in worship services. In addition to Sunday services, year-around midweek vespers might be offered. These can be short (thirty to forty-five minutes) and late (nine or nine-thirty) for the convenience of the students.

In all services students should be made to feel welcome. A "come-as-you-are" atmosphere will encourage casual dress and, more importantly, make students feel at home. In small midweek services this feeling might be enhanced if the pastor doesn't wear his gown. Refreshments after the services will help stimulate friendship among the worshipers.

An informal setting, of course, is not synonymous with a chaotic setting. Even short services should be planned and have a theme. And while variety is good, so is some continuity. We don't want worshipers wondering from one week to the next, "Well, I wonder what's dreamed up for this service."

There are many ways to involve the students in worship. Choir directors as well as choir members can be enlisted from among the students. The service affords students the chance to use their God-given abilities on various instruments: organ, trumpet, trombone, flute, guitar, piano, etc. An occasional "request night" gives students an opportunity to pick and sing their favorite hymns. Students simply raise their hands and ask for the hymn of their choice.

As in any congregation, responsive readings from the hymnal or printed in the service folder will more actively involve students in the service. A campus ministry may call certain of its students as regular "lectors"

(for reading the Scripture lessons) and “speakers” (for short talks relevant to the readings or service in general). If there is the talent and desire, students might even put on a chancel drama.

Students can also serve as ushers, altar helpers (for banners, communion ware, altar hangings) and greeters. These, too, are ways in which our collegians will glorify their Savior as they are actively involved in his worship.

Frustrations and Blessings

We’ve seen many ways to involve students in the campus ministry. No doubt each group will come up with other ideas not listed in these guidelines. Much will depend on the size of the group and its talents. But whatever the circumstances, a little imagination coupled with a willingness to try something new will go a long way.

Naturally there are going to be some frustrations in trying to get students involved. Some of them have already been mentioned. It’s going to take much time and effort on the part of the pastor. He may even feel that in many cases it’s easier to do the task himself. Quite frankly, student involvement might diminish a pastor’s feeling of being indispensable. Moreover, students can be hard to locate. Schedule changes can suddenly take an active student away from a particular job in the campus ministry. Some students might be a bit too independent when placed in leadership positions. Their immaturity, irresponsibility and inexperience might hurt the quality of their work. Students who have the ability don’t always have the desire, and those that have the desire often don’t have the ability.

Nevertheless, the pastor is making a mistake if he decides simply to do it all himself. For the benefits of student involvement outweigh the frustrations.

One of the most obvious benefits is that students understand the campus situation. They move freely in the life of the campus simply because it is their life. When they work with other students, they do so as peers—not as paid professionals. When given responsibility, students often do rise to the occasion. They become motivated and tackle the job at hand with energy and enthusiasm.

As said before, students are the future lay leaders of our congregations. To train them in campus ministry is to prepare them for later congregational work. As they are closely involved with the Word of God, they will grow spiritually. Their spiritual growth may well result in the numerical growth of the church—as more souls enter the Kingdom through student evangelism. This is the final blessing of “multiplying the campus ministry through student involvement.”

CONCLUSION

Proclaiming Freedom on Campus

Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to preach good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to release the oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he said to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” (Luke 4:16-21)

At the time of the 1981 Campus Pastors' Workshop the release of the fifty-two American hostages from Iran was still fresh news. The whole country was excited about the dramatic announcement that our countrymen were being freed after some fifteen months of captivity on foreign soil. In a world so often filled with bad news, this was good news indeed.

In the synagogue in Nazareth long ago Jesus made an even more wonderful announcement of freedom. For he proclaimed freedom from a more cruel bondage than that of any earthly enemies. He proclaimed freedom from our spiritual enemies: the devil, the world and our flesh.

Since the fall into sin Satan has held the whole world in bondage. He has kept us in cruel separation from the family of God. He deludes people with false belief, such as that of the many cults. In his efforts to keep us hostage he appeals to our human reason and sinful pride. Through these means Satan would lead us into hell itself.

The world works hand in hand with the devil. We don't have to be told about the worldly lifestyles practiced by many on campus. We can sum it up with one word—hedonism. In the end, of course, hedonism can produce nothing but despair.

Then there is our own sinful flesh. It, too, would take us hostage. Ours is the "Me Generation." "I'm number one" is the motto of the day. This is the work of the flesh, which looks out for itself even if it means stepping on others. This leads to hatred.

So it is that the devil, the world and our flesh hold the world hostage to hell, hedonism and hatred.

But God proclaims a way out. Already in Eden he promised Adam and Eve that a freedom fighter would come. Jesus was that fighter. He has come. He has fought—in the synagogue of Nazareth, in Gethsemane and on Calvary. Then on Easter Sunday came the great proclamation: "The hostages are free!"

To carry this message to the world, Jesus enlisted his disciples, his agents, if you will. He sent them out to proclaim freedom.

Today he also enlists agents. We pastors have been enlisted to make the announcement. Our Lord has given us the best equipment for this work: his Word. This Word contains the law which smites the sinner's heart and exposes Satan. This Word is also the gospel which tells of God's love, protection and forgiving freedom for those who believe in the atoning death of Christ.

In preparation for this work, we pastors have had good training. But how do we carry out the specialized work of approaching the hostages on our nation's campuses? These guidelines have aimed to help answer this concern. It has tried to show us that we need not sit idly by and do nothing. No, we can work with our Christian students. We can train them also to be agents for Christ. They, too, can be CIA agents—Christians In Action.

Through the work of our campus ministries some individual will be able to repeat the words of Jesus for himself: "Today this scripture is fulfilled for me." That's the result of bringing the message of freedom to hostages on campus, or wherever we might be.