

# Annual Report 2019, 2020 Academic Year for Faith Lift Campus Ministry To Northern Spirit Regional Council June 30, 2020

## Introduction

This report includes statements on Faith Lift Campus Ministry programs and challenges through the early stages of the COVID crisis. There is an Inter Faith Chaplain's Association (IFCA) report for the 2019-2020 Academic year (Fall 2019 through April 2020) There are also statements on Website and Communications, Continuing Education. The Faith Lift Campus Ministry report concludes with a Financial Summary.

Actions taken regarding the Campus Ministry Advisory Board, (see Regional Council decisions May 2019) the request for a New Funding Model conclude the report.

Northern Spirit Regional Council will be referred to as NSRC.

The most frequently asked question I get from students and congregational members is, "What is a Chaplain?" or "What is Campus Ministry?" In short, I reply that a University Chaplain accompanies mostly students and some staff and faculty on the often bumpy road of university life. Chaplains offer the presence of the church, faith and spirituality in a postsecondary learning environment as students face all of the social challenges of living more independently or attending university while still living at home. A Chaplain encourages students to perceive the Divine within themselves, in their lives, and in the world as they experience the suffering and joys of life. Faith Lift Campus Ministry works in concert with other Chaplains and Student Services at UAlberta, connecting people to do their spiritual travelling in community as they encounter different faith traditions, social and cultural differences. Chaplaincies provide communities of peer support, learning and advocacy as well as individual care.

## Programs

**Dinner with Friends** continued throughout the 2019-2020 Academic Year. In April 2019 (the end of the previous academic year) several core members graduated. We had a small group of about eight to ten throughout the fall which included some graduates who are now working as well as a few new faces. This has become quite a supportive group as people have come to know and care for one another over the past several years. As always we really need the support of hosts. Two couples hosted meals in the fall term 2020. Others sponsored meals. The chaplain cooked most of the soups through 2019. In an effort to make face connections local congregations have been encouraged over the years to host a meal. This program stopped abruptly in early March 2020 due to COVID.

**Weavings: Body Mind and Spirit** continued during the school year at The Landing Drop-In Center on Campus. (The Landing is for LGBTQ2SPIA+ and allies.) The group met weekly in the winter term and then biweekly in the fall in the hopes of increasing attendance. Marketing on social media seems key to people hearing about the program and attending. Topics this group discussed in the fall included Creating a Common Language, Trans Queer Bodies, Halloween, a High Holiday for Queers, Queerly Educated, Shame, a trans memorial ritual and self care during the holidays. In the winter we discussed topics including what the unique about black queer experience is and how to be allies. The final session before COVID was a presentation on Two Spirit and what it means to be allies to this part of the Queer community.

**Centering Prayer** Throughout the fall term I offered Centering Prayer once a week attendance declined and it was discontinued after Christmas.

**PASTORAL CARE** I kept in touch with students in a variety of ways. Several hours a week were spent in The Landing (a Drop-In Center on campus for LBGTQ+ people) talking with students who dropped in for support. Chaplains provided support to students in residence after several students died by suicide. These events were followed by several attempted suicides in January and February. I visited with students at Chaplain Drop-In Hours each Friday morning in HUB. In the fall I attended the memorial service to support a student who was giving the eulogy at his father's funeral who died suddenly in November. Throughout each term personal phone calls and emails are sent to students and I also respond to requests for support from the UAlberta/Chaplains website, families and congregations .

In January 2020 I participated with the cross services support of students and staff as they processed their grief and shock at the downing of Ukrainian Flight 152 in Tehran January 8, 2020. Ten students and faculty from the University of Alberta were killed in that tragedy. The last week of January I was asked to officiate at the memorial service for an infant daughter of two University of Alberta alumni whom I have known for some years.

### **Inter Faith Chaplains' Association**

In April 2019 and again 2020 I was elected as Chair of the Inter Faith Chaplains' Association at the University of Alberta. This group cosponsored the annual Festival of Lessons and Carols with the U of A Mixed Chorus December 2, 2019. The Buddhist chaplain and I did two seminars on Spiritual support to students as part of Hall Advisors training in September. We also welcomed a Buddhist Chaplain and Associate and an Orthodox Jewish Chaplain and Associate in the fall. I wrote a letter in support of a grant to have a paid Muslim Chaplain serve post-secondary students. This position was begun in early February.

## **COVID RESPONSE AND CHALLENGES**

On March 16 the University of Alberta was closed. Students, staff, faculty and others service providers including Chaplains were told to work from home. Adapting existing practises to online delivery is not a simple task. Interaction with Campus Ministry is mostly by word of mouth, students recommending or even accompanying another student to the Chaplain's Office. Dropping by for Dinner with Friends is no

longer possible. Since March the casual contact that so often provided much needed support for students in a large institution such as the U of A is no longer possible through events such as this, however the support needs of students are very likely still there. It is expected that in the majority of cases on-line courses will continue in the Fall Term. Taking activities on-line and revising Faith Lift programming frequently continues to demand a steep learning curve for obtaining the technical skills now required of the Chaplain.

In March I phoned any students I had contacts for to check in with them. I have offered two hours a week to students on my contact list to drop-in via zoom link since the beginning of May. In June I broadened the offering to Faith Lift Alumni to check in online. This offering will continue throughout the summer as there are several students who are appreciating this contact.

At The Landing Drop-In Center we were able to offer one more Weavings gathering live on zoom. By late April I was able to offer one hour a week support to students at The Landing Drop Zoom calls. This will continue through the summer. I expect to be able to offer Weavings on line via zoom in the fall.

Different strategies to inform more people of how to be in touch with the chaplain online have also been used by advertising via the Faith Lift UAlberta Facebook page and the FaithLift website giving the days and times and a way to get the zoom link and the offer to speak with people on the phone. The zoom links must be sent out by email each week for security reasons. Personal contacts were made with students with whom I had the necessary information.

## **SUPPORT through COVID**

I received a great deal of support through the weekly gatherings of Northern Spirit Region clergy, weekly United in Learning presentations in support of U.C.C. clergy and the biweekly Ecumenical Chaplain Network gatherings. These supports offered research and resources on COVID and how to deal with the crisis it has caused world wide. I learned what to expect when caregivers are also affected by the crisis and many people shared resources about what Campus Chaplaincies and congregations were doing to BE church during the crisis. These groups kept me in touch with current government updates and emerging safety requirements. They also kept us linked to the United Church of Canada's recommendations to congregations throughout isolation and into the early stages of re-starting the economy.

## **WEBSITE and Communications**

During the 2018-2019 academic year the FaithLiftUAlberta.org website updated and the format of the Newsletter Faith Lift Footnotes was revised with the expertise of Chris Duchek a recent graduate of NAIT. He put together two newsletters in the fall term of the 2019-2020 academic year.

In October 2019 the Faith Lift Chaplain and a graduate did a Minute for Mission presentation to Trinity U.C. Edmonton. These kinds of presentations are helpful for connecting with congregations.

Different social media platforms include Facebook and the FaithLift UAlberta website are being used to inform more people of how to be in touch with the chaplain online are being utilised. In May 2020 I began to post Sabbath Reflections periodically on the Facebook page.

## Looking forward to the 2020-2021 Academic Year

Work will need to be done through the summer to figure out what offerings the Inter Faith Chaplain's Association can offer students collectively in the fall. This summer I will be gathering some people to help me discern other ways to connect with students and offer chaplain support online and which platforms to utilize to make students aware of the service.

## Continuing Education

Study leave 2019 included a week of study leave where I did some reading on Faith Formation and three webinars offered by Convergence on Campus which shared research that has been done on campuses with LGBTQ+ students involved in chaplaincies. In August 2019 it was energising and challenging to attend the Diakonia of the Americas and the Caribbean (DOTAC) for the first time. Through presentations workshops and site visits we explored indigeneity, eco-justice, and global migration. In the fall I was pleased to attend an Inter Cultural Ministries event, organise a Diaconal ministers gathering and attend ReVitalise which was held at St Paul's Edmonton. All of these events and times apart continue to support and enrich my work on Campus with youth and young adults at St Paul's United.

## Financial Summary

The Financial statement attached include the receipts and disbursements for 2019 and 2020 up to May 31, 2020. Fortunately the ministry has some surplus to cushion the effects of decreasing financial support but *this situation needs to be understood as temporary and a sustainable funding model needs to be put in place as soon as possible.*

The Mission and Service grant application was delivered September 2, 2019 and the application to Spruce Grove Thrift Shop was sent in October. The Region grant for 2020 for \$22,000 was already approved in May. The Spruce Grove Grant was reduced from \$3,500 in 2018 to \$2,000 in 2019.

Donations (no receipt) include the Spruce Grove Grant, support from congregations other than St Paul's Edmonton, and church groups.

Donations (receipts) are from individuals.

As noted in the financial statement below St Paul's has been able to benefit from one of the federal COVID 19 support programs called the Federal 10% Wage Subsidy. This program rebates 10% of an employee's salary for 12 weeks to a maximum of \$1,375 per employee. We expect to receive in the range of \$5,500 in total. This report reflects our first installment of \$3,439, allocated between Church operations and the Campus Ministry program. Our last installment should be received June 2020.

**Faith Lift Campus Ministry Financial Report**  
**May 31, 2020**

Revenue	YTD Actual	2020 Budget	Remaining Allocation	2019 Actual
Regional	11,250	22,500	11,250	20,000
St Paul's	3,450	8,280	4,830	8,280
★ Donations-Receipts	2,565	10,500	7,935	10,288
Donations-No Receipts	2,250	5,000	2,750	4,971
Fundraising-No Receipts	-	-	-	-
Wage Subsidy 10%	688	-	(688)	-
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>20,203</b>	<b>46,280</b>	<b>26,078</b>	<b>43,539</b>
<b>Expenses</b>				
Salary & benefits	20,329	47,764	27,435	46,827
Program Costs	246	3,500	3,254	1,064
Fundraising	-	-	-	-
Administration	-	400	400	1,366
Misc	-	-	-	-
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>20,575</b>	<b>51,664</b>	<b>31,089</b>	<b>49,257</b>
	<b>(373)</b>	<b>(5,384)</b>	<b>(5,011)</b>	<b>(5,718)</b>

★ Donations (receipts) are from individuals.

Donations (no receipt) include the Spruce Grove Grant, support from congregations (not including St Paul's U.C. Edmonton), and church groups.

## **Campus Ministry Advisory Board**

“That NSRC Executive appoint two members to serve on an campus ministry advisory board in consultation with St Paul’s U.C., Edmonton. “ Motion to NSRC May 2019.

Beginning fall 2018 and into winter 2019 I worked with Helen Madill (a St Paul’s U.C. representative to Northern Spirit Regional Council to bring a request for funding proposal to St Paul’s Board and then a wider proposal for Campus Ministry to Northern Spirit Region May 2019. The proposal asked for a more sustainable funding model, an Advisory Committee to support Faith Lift Campus Ministry and a wider vision for Campus Ministry in the region.

At the First gathering of NSRC it was decided that there should be an Advisory Board created to support Campus Ministry and create a vision for Campus ministry throughout the region.

At the writing of this report there have been several conversations with representatives from the regional executive. In June of 2020 Marilyn Carrol and Denise Davis Taylor came up with a mandate for the Advisory committee for the purposes of recruiting potential members. It was felt that four persons could do this initial work. Four persons were identified to approach to be approached to sit on the committee which would meet virtually. The initial work of the Advisory group will be: To create a Vision for Campus ministry in Northern Spirit Region, investigate and propose a Funding Model for Campus Ministry(ies) in the region, and to investigate different leadership models for providing campus ministry keeping in mind that many post -secondary institutions will be offering classes online in fall and winter of 2020 and possibly beyond.

## **New Funding Model**

Faith Lift was granted funding for 2020 (\$20,000) 2021 (\$22,000) and 2022 (\$22,000) by NSRC. The current model of grants and support of individuals, congregations and church groups will continue. It should be noted that this model is NOT SUSTAINABLE. It was agreed that there should be an Advisory Board created to support Campus Ministry and create a vision for Campus ministry throughout the region. Presumably the current funding model of grants from the region for 2020, 2021, 2022 plus ongoing individual, congregational and group support will stay in place until a vision for campus ministry and a proposed funding model for campus ministry (ies) in the region has been arrived at.