

CAMPUS CHAPEL

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## INKLINGS

the newsletter of campus chapel ministries

[www.campuschapel.org](http://www.campuschapel.org)





## KEEPERS OF THE CLOAK

The legend is that a Roman soldier, on a cold and wet evening in 4th century Gaul, encountered a beggar who had no protection from the elements. On a whim, this young soldier drew his sword and cut his own cloak in half, giving part of it to the man in need. That night the soldier dreamed that Jesus himself was the beggar wearing the half-cloak, and based on that vision he left the army, devoted his life to God, and became the priest we know now as St. Martin of Tours.

The half of the cloak that St. Martin kept had its own interesting history. It became a sacred relic and eventually a standard carried by the French kings into battle, representing the presence of God going with them. This holy object, known in Latin as the *capella*, the little cloak, was entrusted to a priest who became the keeper of the cloak, the *cappellanus* (or *cappellani* in plural, not be confused with *capellini*, the pasta!). And the reliquary where the half-cloak remained when not being borne into battle became known in French as the *chapele*, the origin of our words chapel and chaplain.\*



Some of our grad students (and their partners) gathering for community in one of their apartments.

As we enter the calmer season on campus, it's worth taking a quiet moment to reflect on how we continue this calling to be the keepers of the cloak. Our half-cloak (the other half given already given away to those in need), is the sacred trust that we have received from God that we continue to offer to our context, the University of Michigan. It is the truth of God's constant and steadfast presence in our midst, in our libraries, our labs, our classrooms, and our cafeterias. And our Chapel, the home for this gift we have to offer, is a place of both sacred protection and holy encounter with the divine. So our calling, too, is to steward this sacred space as a place of welcome, inquiry, and love.

It is no small thing to live into this vocation that dates back to St. Martin (and far beyond). As chaplains, the keepers of the cloak (which we are all called to be in our own contexts), we bring the truth of Christ's love into the spaces we inhabit. May the Spirit guide and strengthen us in that calling.

-Pastor Matt

\*Many thanks to my colleague Rev. Dr. Michael Fallon, keeper of the cloak at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, for bringing the story of this etymology to my attention.

## MARK CHARLES: CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM, CREATION STORIES, AND CORN

The Center for Faith & Scholarship's spring lecture featured indigenous activist, author, and former CRC pastor, Mark Charles this year. His talk *Creation Stories, Christian Nationalism, and Corn: Understanding the Doctrine of Discovery's Devastating In-*

In addition to the talk, Mark joined students for one of our regular Wednesday Night Dinners in the Chapel basement, where they had the chance to get to know him better over homemade soup, salad, and bread. He shared parts of his journey from

growing up in Rehoboth, New Mexico, going away for education, starting a career in ministry, only to return to the Reservation with his family years later, and to embark on a life of advocacy and activism.

We are grateful we can bring messages like Mark's to our community, and our ecumenical and campus partners were well-represented at the event. If we want to guide our path forward we must first understand how we arrived at our present.



fluence on our Health, our Faith(s), and our Politics was timely and thought-provoking. He engaged our current political moment in the United States with a historical perspective of North American colonialization, and the even greater perspective of Christian and indigenous creation stories.

A fascinating aspect of his talk was the thread of health and food woven throughout. He introduced us to some of the thinking that will be part of his forthcoming book, *Decolonizing Health*. Beyond the political, social, and religious ramifications of colonization, this connection to chronic health challenges that our society is facing today was deeply insightful.





## NEWS AND NOTES

• Congratulations to **Annika From** for completing her PhD in Psychology this spring, with a dissertation on the psychology of romantic relationships! Annika has been a devoted member of the Chapel community, serving on our board and leading various community events (such as a very memorable God @ the Pub discussion). She is always quick to greet others with a warm smile and a kind word. As our resident Californian, she regales us with sto-



ries of going surfing in high school P.E. classes back in San Diego. And she is one of the conveners of the Chapel's unofficial pub trivia team (a force in the local trivia scene!). Most of all, we are grateful for Annika's thoughtful and deep faith, which makes her unafraid to engage tough questions and motivates her profound empathy and sense of social justice.

• Once again, we partnered with our Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Episcopal friends to put on **Holy Week Services**. It was our turn to host Maundy Thursday (pictured here), while the Wesley Foundation put together a Good Friday Tenebrae, and Lord of Light Lutheran hosted a Saturday Easter vigil (the turn around from midnight Saturday night to Easter Sunday morning was not for the faint of heart!). We're delighted to work ecumenically on these services to offer a range of liturgical experiences for our students and community members.



• Congratulations to our own **Ben Hollenbach**, lecturer in the anthropology department, for winning yet another teaching award! This year's is from Michigan Housing, voted on by residential students.



### SCAN TO DONATE!

As we near the end of our fiscal year, giving to the Campus Chapel is about 10% under budget. We have not yet seen support from institutional sources (denomination, classes, and congregations) decline precipitously, but it seems likely in the near future. We need your support now more than ever to continue our work of ministry. Thank you!

