

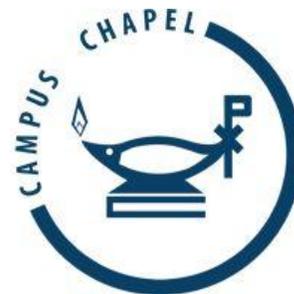
CAMPUS CHAPEL

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ANN ARBOR, MI 48104

INKLINGS
the newsletter of campus chapel ministries
www.campuschapel.org





HUMANITY ACROSS BOUNDARIES

It doesn't take profound insight to note that things in the United States are divided right now. It often feels as if we are living in a nation with two (or more) separate societies, each with its own cultural narratives, sources of information, entertainment outlets, and more. When we encounter perspectives from other sides, they can seem so out of touch, we question the sanity of those espousing them. The divides feel like chasms that are only deepening.

It's also not a profound insight to suggest that the church should be a place these divides can be overcome, but we're not doing it very well. The larger Christian community is just as siloed and divided as the rest of our world, may-



be more so. I wish I had something genuinely profound to offer in terms of a solution. I don't. But it occurred to me on Ash Wednesday that this dusty liturgical holiday is not a bad place to start.

The entire point of the day that marks the beginning of the annual Lenten journey is our human frailty and finitude. "Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return." If we can't find unity any other way, at least we know we're all burdened with human failings and limitations. It's a call to humility that can ground all our competing truth claims with a sense that "I might be wrong." My ideas of what's right and wrong with our nation and our world can be just as myopic as anybody else's.

Don't mishear me – I have deep convictions about the abuse perpetuated by certain law enforcement agencies in recent months and the self-serving corruption of particular government officials, among other current issues. But I try to see the humanity in all and discern the underlying values driving different perspectives, because without the lifegiving breath of the Holy Spirit, we are all just dust. And this cuts across all our constructed divides.

(Continued)

For the Campus Chapel, Ash Wednesday has become one of the most ecumenical days of the year. For the 34th year in a row, we worshipped with ecumenical partners from across Ann Arbor in a Taizé service first created by Don Postema. As I imposed ashes on friends and neighbors from First Presbyterian, Ann Arbor Community Reformed Church, Lord of Light Lutheran, Ann Arbor Community Church and more, the practice felt grounding and leveling. We are all humbled before God. And earlier in the day, I joined my Methodist and Lutheran colleagues (pictured on page one) in offering ashes on the diag. Some students asked if it was ok to receive them if they came from a different faith tradition or had little to no faith at all. My usual response was, “Of course you can. We all need a reminder of our limitations and need for something greater than ourselves.”

We are all dust, crafted from the dirt of the earth. But that good soil beneath our feet also contains the richness that sustains life, from seed to plant to animal to human. May we all observe a holy Lent, recognizing our need for God and reaching across the divides to meet one another in that need and experiencing God’s gracious response.

- Pastor Matt

NEWS AND NOTES

- Our **PhD Student Lunch** continues to be a space of encouragement and connection for PhD students of faith. Every other week we gather in the Chapel basement for a shared meal and conversation about the joys and challenges of pursuing this higher degree. And this year we’ve had participants from nine different Ann Arbor worshipping communities.

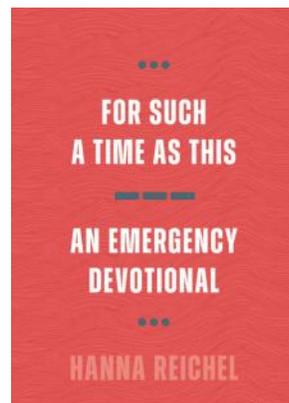


- Congratulations to our own **Cezary Karwowski**, one of the winners of the annual UM Concerto Competition. In the finals he offered a brilliant performance of Ignacy Jan Paderewski’s Piano Concerto in A Minor, op. 17, which he will now get to present with a full UM orchestra next fall. Cezary commented, “I am especially looking forward to performing the Paderewski Piano Concerto and sharing the unique Polish piano repertoire with the School of Music, Theater, and Dance community.”



- Ten members of the Chapel community enjoyed our annual outing to a **UM Women's Basketball Game**. The Wolverines topped the Wisconsin Badgers in a game that was not very close, but lack of drama on the court allowed for good conversation among our group!

- The Chapel community is studying Hanna Reichel's recent book ***For Such a Time as This: An Emergency Devotional*** during Lent this year. It reflects on what faithful Christian practice looks like in challenging times, based on Reichel's expertise as a scholar of German Christianity during the Nazi era, especially the work of Karl Barth and Dietrich Bonhoeffer.



- Over President's Day weekend, Pastor Matt was invited to be a guest speaker at Agape & Ecclesia, the CRC campus ministry at **Loyola University Chicago**. The campus ministers there are longtime friends and colleagues of his, and it was a joy to see their ministry firsthand and offer. He slotted into their series on faith practices with a sermon about fasting and feasting based on Jesus' words in John 6 about being the bread of life.



SUPPORT THE CAMPUS CHAPEL

Thank you to everyone who included the Campus Chapel in your 2025 year-end giving. We are grateful for the generosity of the extended Chapel community that enables our continued ministry at the University of Michigan. For 86 years God has provided for us through your faithfulness. Please continue to support our ministry both in prayer and with your financial gifts. You can scan the QR code to donate!

