

To All Who Care For Students,

Thank you for your interest in connecting with college and university students! This guide is designed to help get you started on an intentional ministry of keeping in touch with the students in your congregation.

Connecting with college and university students is a challenging ministry. You won't always see the fruits of your labors immediately. You might even be tempted to give up. Keep going! As you get to know your students and watch their lives unfold, you'll find many good reasons to remind yourself, "well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Use the ideas in this guide or develop your own plan for ministry. God, the church, your students and the world will benefit from your time, care and attention.

May God's Spirit bless your efforts!

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This Will Help you Get Started

- 1. Organize a small team** to be responsible for student ministry
- 2. Prepare a list of your students:** include those "away" at residential schools and those studying near home or via web-based classes.
- 3. Let campus ministries know about your students away from home by using the ELCA's campus ministry website** (www.elca.org/campusministry). Be sure to include as much information as possible: including student name, campus, home phone and home congregation. For students attending college in La Crosse, send information to: campusminister@charterinternet.com
- 4. Be amazed!** Students may not always attend programs or express appreciation. "Success" may be hard to measure. But watch and see. Over the years God will work wonders through your ministry of care!

January

Hold college recognition Sunday. Challenge the students to link their unfolding lives with God's creative and redemptive activity for the world. Follow the service with a reception. Ask how life is going. Listen well for themes of faith, spirit, unfolding self...

February

Remind students of summer job possibilities at camps and christian ministries. Let those who are graduating know about the year long service opportunities available through Lutheran Volunteer Corps or the Division for Global Mission.

March

Sponsor students on spring break mission trips. Many Lutheran Campus Ministries sponsor spring break trips throughout the United States and the world!

April

Do you have graduates this year?

Begin planning for a Graduation Recognition Sunday. Contact a student you know is graduating and ask them for names of others who are graduating.

May

Recognize graduates in a worship service or at a congregational dinner. Are these new grads going on to school, getting a job, staying in your community, moving away? If they are, find a way to send them with your blessing. Ask gently about dreams for the future... not everyone knows what their next step is. Some are excited, some are terrified.

June

Give the phone number and address of the Lutheran campus ministry on the campus your graduates will be attending. Encourage your new graduates and parents to visit campus ministry when they register for classes in the summer.

July

Begin collecting students' names and schools. Ask the campus ministries near these schools to send you PR so that you can personally encourage your students to get involved when they move.

August

Be especially sensitive to the hopes and fears of those leaving home for the first time. Classes begin anywhere from mid August to late September. Send those who leave away with your blessing and pray for all ministries of higher education.

September

Ask your pastor to include prayers during worship for all who study and all who teach, add students to your Congregation's mailing list so they'll continue to receive newsletter. List all the students and their campuses in the newsletter and invite the congregation to pray for them.

October

Send any additional names or address updates to the ministries at the various campuses and begin a group email list. Keep in touch with your students throughout the year! Send a note every now and then (perhaps once a month) to let them know that they are remembered and prayed for.

November

Ask the pastor or another member of your ministry team to send a personal letter to your students'. (Be sure to check this out well in advance to be sure they are still where you think they are!)

December

Send a care package to your students! Cookies, hot chocolate, and nutritious snacks are all appreciated by your students as they study for final exams.

A Twelve-Month Guide for Congregations That Care for Students



Lutheran
Campus Ministry
La Crosse

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