

History of Lutheran Campus Ministry in Northern Virginia

Lutheran Campus ministry efforts in Northern Virginia began in the mid 1990's with individual attempts by local Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) congregations to provide religious and spiritual experiences at George Mason University (GMU). Lord of Life Lutheran Church in Fairfax was the leader in these attempts because of its close proximity to the GMU Fairfax campus.

As an outgrowth of these initial efforts and the interest of a Lutheran pastoral student intern from the Gettysburg Seminary, Darcy Percy, a small informal group formed at Lord of Life in early September, 2003. Later in that month, the group informed the campus ministry committee of the ELCA's Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod of its efforts in this area. This facilitated interest from other churches in Northern Virginia.

In October 2003, three ELCA congregations – Lord of Life, Hope Lutheran and Emmanuel Lutheran – began meeting as an informal coalition. As a way of going forward with limited initial resources, the group decided to investigate joining the United College Ministries of Northern Virginia (UCMNV), an organization that had been present on the George Mason campus for some time.

The coalition met again in November 2003, and two additional ELCA congregations – Peace Lutheran and Holy Trinity Lutheran joined the coalition.

Two members of the group -- Darcy Percy and Roy Swift -- began drafting a concept paper including a mission statement, short-term and long-term goals and objectives.

At meetings in December 2003 and January 2004, the coalition evaluated the concept documents and decided not to join the UCMNV, given their increasing resources and desire to pursue their own objectives.

In February 2004, the coalition informed the Metropolitan Washington DC Synod of its decision to become a Lutheran Campus Ministry for Northern Virginia under the auspices of the ELCA national program. The synod offered \$3,200 to support peer ministers and \$2,000 for an event at GMU.

In the Fall of 2004 William Johnson, a graduate student at GMU, took the lead in obtaining official GMU recognition of Lutheran Campus Ministry as an official student activity. Official recognition was granted in January 2005. This status allowed the coalition to begin activities on campus.

In the Winter & Spring of 2005, the coalition began efforts to identify students and begin activities at GMU.

In the late Spring, King of Kings joined the coalition. Judy Hangen, Director of Education at King of Kings led the initiative for recruitment. At the same time, Willi McCarey from Emmanuel joined and began the initiative to incorporate the informal coalition, create a 501c3 tax-exempt organization and obtain official recognition from the ELCA.

By September 2005, the coalition was officially on campus recruiting students and holding a weekly dinner and bible study.

On November 7, 2005, the Commonwealth of Virginia approved the Articles of Incorporation and incorporated the coalition as Northern Virginia Lutheran Campus Ministries, Inc., a non-profit, non-stock corporation.

On April 28, 2006, NVLCM obtained insurance from the Philadelphia Insurance Company. This will cover general liability for the board, volunteers and paid staff, crime coverage, auto coverage, workers compensation, property and any sexual misconduct.