

CALGARY CAMPUS MINISTRY

Advent 2011

2011 CALGARY CAMPUS MINISTRY COMMITTEE

Rev. Curtis Korver chair
Aimie Bouma treasurer
Dr. Gwen Hollaar secretary
Karen Marcotte
Daniel Ginez
Heather Laursen
Chaplain Paul Verhoef *ex officio*

The *Calgary Campus Ministry* is a ministry of the *Christian Reformed Church (CRC)* at the *University of Calgary*, and involved in other places throughout that city. The ministry is connected and responsible to the collection of CRC churches (called a 'classis') in Southern Alberta and Saskatchewan by way of the committee.

The ministry also reports to *Christian Reformed Home Missions*, and is part of the Western Canada region of Christian missional communities.

Rev. Paul Verhoef has been the lead *chaplain* since August 2004, though he has been joined by many student leaders and a couple interns over his time.

He sends out ministry updates to the '*Friends of Campus Ministry*'—usually in the form of a monthly email called *Prayer Notes*, and a tri-annual newsletter with stories.

If you'd like to be on that email list, contact Paul. He'd love to add you.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Holding and Creating Spaces

This past summer, Monique and I were invited to St. Benedict's Monastery for a week of dialogues, meditation, and meal conversations with almost 20 others. At one point in the week, a small group of us walked through the monastery nestled in the Colorado mountain valley. At one point, we asked the trappist monk what he saw himself and this monastery offering to the world. He answered, "*I think we're simply holding a space.* We're dedicated to stability in the midst of change, faithfulness to the simplicity of a monastic life and practice, and obedience to God. Our presence here is a simple reminder of one way of living in a world that keeps filling every vacant space with busy-ness and complication. We live in this space, and keep it available."



His words came back to me when a student happened upon our Faith & Spirituality Centre in mid-October. She wondered what we did—and as I spoke about some of the programs, conversations, and spiritual practices we coordinate and offer, she said something similar. "It seems so good to have some place on this busy campus like this:



a space to pray, to listen, to be in conversation with others about a spiritual life." It reminded me that we too hold a space at the University of Calgary. And if we vacated this space (if all the chaplains left), I would guess it'd quickly be snapped up and reshaped for some other use. Our presence holds this space open for all.

And while our presence simply holds this quiet, communal, reflective,

spiritual space open, we also get to step out and create spaces within the University. Coming next semester, student leader Karen Paul and myself (along with a team that's being formed right now) will be creating a space for stories about the intersection of Faith & Justice. There's plenty of academic conversation on this campus about justice, and there's many places where religion is studied, but not many places where the two get to be seen intertwined together. So we'll be hosting a "Festival for Faith & Justice" near the end of February/beginning of March. As plans are being made, we'd cherish your prayers, as speakers are invited, non-profit groups invited, a team takes shape to organize, faculties and departments are invited to partner with us, and finally students, staff, and faculty are invited to hear the stories from practitioners around the world, to imagine this living intersection of Faith & Justice, to celebrate the work that God has been doing in ushering in a world where there is 'freedom for the prisoners, recovery of sight for the blind, and the release of the oppressed' (Isaiah 61, Luke 4).

We covet your prayers and connections. For more stories or to continue to pray with us, send me your email address, and I'll add you to our 'Friends of Campus Ministry' list.

Grace and Peace to you this Advent,
Paul Verhoef