

# Houston Lutheran Campus and Young Adult Ministry

Serving the students, faculty, and staff  
Of Rice University, the University of Houston  
and the institutions of the Texas Medical Center

A partnership of the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod,  
Christ the King Lutheran Church in Houston, Texas,  
and ELCA Lutheran Campus Ministry

## Self Study

### Mission Statement

The mission of Houston Lutheran Campus and Young Adult Ministry is to:

- invite all to be nourished through the proclamation of the Word, to be fed with the Body and Blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper, and to live in the covenant of their Baptism;
- serve and minister to students, faculty and staff of Rice University, the University of Houston, institutions of the Texas Medical Center and young adults of the Houston community in whatever capacity is needed;
- create and maintain a community that welcomes all and excludes none;
- nurture the faith journey of all of our members by encouraging open inquiry and challenging discussion, and
- serve the surrounding community in meaningful ways.

### Current Situation

In Houston, Texas, Christ the King Lutheran Church has provided campus and young adult ministry for the students, faculty and staff of Rice University and the institutions of the Texas Medical Center, as well as for young adults (non-students) in the Houston community, for over 30 years, with support from the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod. This ministry has been an important aspect of the ministry of Christ the King Lutheran Church, enriching the lives of students, young adults, and families who are members of the congregation.

Rice University is a highly respected private university with approximately 4,000 undergraduate and graduate students. The Texas Medical Center is a unique asset for Houston, with two medical schools, a dental school, four nursing schools and some of the nation's leading hospitals. Campus and Young Adult Ministry at Christ the King Lutheran Church provides outreach and opportunities for religious education, social activities, and fellowship to students, faculty and staff at the above institutions, and also to other young adults in Houston. Campus and Young Adult Ministry hosts social and sporting events, weekly study breaks, discussion groups and service activities, as well as

monthly student- and young adult-oriented luncheons on theological, academic, and current events topics. Campus and Young Adult Ministry is involved regionally and nationally in the events of the Lutheran Student Movement, is a pan-Lutheran, student-led organization created to promote the active participation of students in the life and mission of the Lutheran Church on their campuses, in their communities, and as individuals.

Many students and young adults also participate in the liturgy of Word and Sacrament at Christ the King Lutheran Church, its musical activities and service opportunities along side members of the church congregation. Participants in Campus and Young Adult Ministry at Christ the King Lutheran Church have initiated a “Feed the Homeless” ministry program and have been leaders in the development and success of a meditative worship service in the tradition of the ecumenical community of Taizé, France, held every Saturday evening.

In addition to the current Campus and Young Adult ministry program, the community is blessed with the recent opening of Dry Bones Coffee House near Houston Community College’s Central Campus. Dry Bones, a project of the ELCA and First Evangelical Lutheran Church, seeks to minister to and provide a gathering place for Houston’s young adults. More information about our specific activities in Campus and Young Adult Ministry may be found at its Web site: [www.lcmhouston.org](http://www.lcmhouston.org).

### **The Need for Expansion**

Despite our successes, the city of Houston has a large unmet need for Lutheran campus ministry. The University of Houston, which has an enrollment of approximately 30,000 students, is just one of the academic institutions not currently served by an Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) Lutheran Campus Ministry program (although the predecessors of the ELCA were among the first groups to become “charter members” of the A.D. Bruce Religion Center at UH). Christ the King Lutheran Church and the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod, together with the support of ELCA Lutheran Campus Ministry, have agreed to enter into a shared ministry to expand campus and young adult ministry in Houston and to share the responsibility of funding and supporting a called clergy person who will devote his or her full energy to campus and young adult ministry.

### **Campus Pastor Position Description**

**Job Purpose:** The purpose of the Campus Pastor is to provide leadership and guidance to the ministry of the students, faculty, and staff of Rice University, the University of Houston, and the institutions of the Texas Medical Center, as well as young adults (non-students) in the Houston community, building upon and enriching the Lutheran Campus and Young Adult Ministry program already established through Christ the King Lutheran Church.

**Duties and Responsibilities:** The position of Campus Pastor is a full-time position. Duties and responsibilities of the Campus Pastor include the following:

1. Minister to students and young adults by establishing and building relationships with them and being available to students and young adults where and when they are found. This will require an active participation in university student life and maintaining an on-campus presence, so as to be most accessible to students.
2. Minister to students and young adults through Word and Sacrament, including both worship and Bible study. The Campus Pastor must demonstrate excellent preaching and teaching

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abilities, and will be available to occasionally lead liturgy at Christ the King Lutheran Church as well as at other area congregations.

3. Minister to students and young adults by developing their faith, teaching students how to lead and plan worship, training students how to be leaders in campus and young adult ministry and in their communities.
4. Minister to students and young adults by providing opportunities for faith to become active in love, including planning regular service projects and/or service trips.
5. Coordinate, supervise, and support Houston Lutheran Campus and Young Adult Ministry by
  - a. cultivating a culture of hospitality
  - b. counseling and visiting students and young adults as needed, and
  - c. participating in University campus ministry events and in events of the Houston Lutheran Campus and Young Adult Ministry.
6. Advise local, regional and state campus ministry boards as necessary.
7. Advocate for Houston Lutheran Campus and Young Adult Ministry throughout the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod, and participate in the governance of this ministry through the Houston Lutheran Campus Ministry Council.
8. Pursue continuing education to provide opportunity for personal renewal, enrichment of devotional life, and development of pastoral effectiveness.
9. Other duties, as required.

**Qualifications:** Candidates for the position of Campus Pastor must meet the following qualifications:

1. Be ordained and rostered by the ELCA
2. Faithfully adhere to his or her ordination vows
3. Demonstrate an aptitude for ministry in an academic setting, including communication skills, interpersonal skills, and a commitment to personal and spiritual growth and professional development
4. Have a vision for Houston Lutheran Campus and Young Adult Ministry and the ability to see it done.

### Funding

Funds for Lutheran Campus and Young Adult Ministry programming shall come from the Houston Lutheran Campus Ministry Council and Christ the King Lutheran Church. The salary and benefits package of the Campus Pastor shall be agreed upon by the Houston Lutheran Campus Ministry Council and the Christ the King Lutheran Church Council, and shared on an equal basis. The salary and benefits package shall include a base salary, a housing allowance, ELCA pension and medical benefits, and other benefits as determined in the call process. Office space will be provided for the Campus Pastor at both Christ the King Lutheran Church as well as at the A.D. Religion Bruce Center located on the University of Houston's main campus.

Christ the King Lutheran Church will be the fiscal partner for the Houston Lutheran Campus Ministry Council. The Houston Campus Ministry Council shall remit its one-half share of the salary and programming budget to Christ the King Lutheran Church on a monthly basis. Christ the King Lutheran Church shall issue regular checks for salary and housing to the Campus Pastor and shall make appropriate payments to the Board of Pensions.

The Houston Lutheran Campus Ministry Council has established a preliminary budget of \$100,000 per year. In order to provide financial stability for the Campus Pastor and the expanded ministry, the Houston Lutheran Campus Ministry Council is seeking pledges to cover the budget for the first five years of the ministry.

### **Benchmarks**

In order to be good and faithful stewards of the resources contributed to the success of this new initiative, the Houston Lutheran Campus Ministry Council will establish benchmarks that will be incorporated in the ongoing review of the ministry's effectiveness. At the end of the first year of the ministry, we expect to report progress in the following areas:

1. Building on existing campus and young adult ministry programs in order to expand service, study, and fellowship opportunities for students
2. Further developing peer ministry among students to reach out to fellow students on each of the campuses served
3. Building and nurturing a worshipping community that draws on the student and young adult populations of the Houston area
4. Developing channels for pastoral care and support to students.