

**God's grace doesn't have an age limit!
Neither do our church's ministries!**

The years right after high school are some of the most critical in terms of life challenges and choices. Young adults are not always the most faithful in attendance at church during those years, but they always need the concern and encouragement of a caring congregation. This guide will help your congregation be in ministry to young adults in college.

While campus ministry focuses on students, it is vital that local congregations also stay in touch with young adults who start work immediately after high school. Their milestones deserve celebrating and they also need connection to a caring congregation. Where possible, we urge congregations to use these guidelines to minister to working young adults in the same or similar ways.

If the church is to continue to share the Good News of Jesus Christ, we must equip each succeeding generation with the tools and the relationships that they need to be disciples who take up the challenge of the Great Commission.

Lutheran Campus Ministry is ready to help your congregation and your ministry. Call on us!

Celene Welch
Lutheran Campus Pastor

Lutheran Campus Ministry



Caring for the Future

Lutheran Campus Ministry at Denton

Catholic Campus Center
1303 West Eagle Drive
Denton, Texas 76201-6649
Website: orgs.unt.edu/lcm

Celene Welch, Lutheran Campus Pastor
Mobile: 817-269-1229
Office: 940/898-8908
Email: PastorCWelch@msn.com
or LCMDenton@msn.com

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**Twelve Months
of Ideas
for Congregations
Who Care for Students**



**It all started
on campus.**

A small graphic of a rolled-up scroll with a tassel, positioned at the bottom right of the text.

Start Anywhere — You'll be amazed at the difference it makes!

7 July

Collect students' names and schools. Find out where young adults from your congregation will be in the coming year (double check contact information on returning students). Gather as much information as possible: names, schools, home and school addresses, phone numbers, e-mails. Send this information Lutheran Campus Ministry at Denton or fill out a student referral form online at www.elca.org/campusministry/studentref.html. In this way, ELCA campus ministries can establish contact with the students before they arrive on campus. **Plan a gathering for all post-high school young adults** that celebrates the big changes and challenges that they face.

8 August

Prepare a short liturgy for the beginning of the academic year; pray for and bless individuals by name. Try especially to include those who are first-year students and those going away to school. Classes begin anywhere from mid-August to late September, so this may occur very early in the month. Be especially sensitive to the hopes and fears of those leaving home for the first time.

9 September

In worship, **include prayers for all who study and all who teach.** Provide the church office with academic year addresses for students and be sure to **add students to the church's mailing list** so that students receive the church newsletter. Provide the students with information about **churches near their schools and Lutheran Campus Ministry.** Give parents a copy of the booklet *Distances, Discoveries, and Homecomings*.*

10 October

This is the time when homesickness sets in and the academic load weighs heavily. **Send a personal note, a card, or an e-mail to each student.** (Perhaps individuals on the ministry team will "adopt" certain students.) Ask them how they're doing and what they're thinking about. **Check in with the families of students.** Some transitions are tough!

11 November

Send something fun, encouraging or nutritious! By November, students are living on the ragged edge. A small package of goodies says that someone cares. Imagine a student who can say to friends, "Look what my church sent me!" (Be sure to include the students who stay at home for school or even older adults in college.)

12 December

Send an Advent Calendar or a devotional booklet and an encouraging note. Pray for sleep and sanity and wisdom . . . and safe travels during the holidays! **Invite returning students to meet with high school students.** What wisdom do they have to offer? **Have "face time" with your "adopted" students.** Ask how life is going. Listen for themes of faith, spirit, vocation, self-discovery.

1 January

Make sure that your contact information is up-to-date. It isn't uncommon for students to change residences or even schools. **Prepare a display at church with pictures of your students,** listing their school and classification. Invite the congregation to contribute materials for a Valentine Care Package.

2 February

Send a Valentine Care Package to each student. Include Lenten devotional materials. Who wouldn't want to get a package that doesn't have an invoice included?

3 March

Invite the pastor to send a personal letter or note to each student. Encourage people in the congregation to be thinking of summer jobs that students might fill.

4 April

Correspond with your students and **remind them of summer job opportunities at camps and other ministries,** as well as possibilities with congregation contacts.

5 May

Plan to reintegrate students into the life of the congregation during the summer months. Students might work with youth groups, teach Vacation Bible School or Sunday School, organize servant events, help with maintenance projects, participate in sports, assist in worship. **Offer special prayers for those who graduate from college. Observe a liturgy for those graduating from high school.** Give a gift that will "keep giving." (Some congregations have given a quilt.)

6 June

Keep working hard at integrating returning students into congregational life. If graduates are moving away (for more schooling, a job, military service), **provide them with information about congregations that will be near to them. Continue to get to know the young adults in your congregation.** What have their experiences taught them? Is faith different for them since they've been in college? **Organize your ministry team for the coming year.**

*Distances, Discoveries, and Homecomings: Prayers for parents of college students is available from Augsburg-Fortress.

Want more ideas? Would you like share your ideas with others? See <http://www.elca.org/campusministry> or contact Pastor Celene Welch (PastorCWelch@msn.com or 817/269-1229).