

Dear Members and Friends of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains,

Grace and peace to you from the University of Jamestown!

On behalf of UJ Campus Ministry, I want to once again express our deep gratitude for the continued generosity of the Presbytery of the Northern Plains. Your support is not simply a gift to a department or a collection of programs. It allows us to meet students where they are, create opportunities for them to encounter Christ, grow in their faith, and remind them that they are known, loved, and part of a community that cares for them.

Over the past year, and already in the opening weeks of this new school year, we have continued to see students eager to engage with Campus Ministry in both large and small ways.

Our Bible studies continue to be plentiful and well attended across campus. Students gather throughout the week to open Scripture together, ask questions, pray, and grow alongside one another. We also continue to purchase Bibles that we can place directly into the hands of students who need them. I have already had the privilege of giving several away this semester. It is a simple thing, but there is something incredibly meaningful about being able to tell a student who wants to know more about God, "Here, this is yours."

We have also been finding new ways to create small, accessible points of connection with students through what we call our "Stop and Go" events. These are quick, Christ-centered interactions where students can stop by the Campus Ministry offices as they move through their day. Sometimes it is as simple as sharing their favorite worship song. This Thanksgiving, we plan to fill our space with sticky notes through an activity called "1,000 Things Went Right Today." Students will be invited to write down something for which they are grateful, something big or something very small, and add it to the growing collection. Our hope is to create a visible reminder of the countless ways God is at work in the ordinary lives and everyday moments of our students.

Your generosity also allows us to invest intentionally in the students who serve as leaders within Campus Ministry. Our annual Campus Ministry Leader Training Retreat is possible because of the support we receive from the Presbytery. This retreat gives our student leaders time away together to prepare for the year, grow in their own faith, learn what it means to lead through service, and build the community that will sustain them as they minister to their peers throughout the year.

That support extends to my own growth and care as well. Presbytery funding allows me to maintain membership in the Association for Chaplaincy and Spiritual Life in Higher Education (ACSLHE). Through this professional community, I am able to learn from, support, and be supported by others who understand the unique opportunities and challenges of serving college students. That connection helps ensure that I, too, have a community of people who share a passion for this work and can help me continue to grow in how I serve our students.

This fall, Campus Ministry was also privileged to lead the prayer walk during LeaderTown, UJ's character and leadership conference. As we walked throughout campus, we stopped at places representing different parts of university life and prayed over our students, faculty, staff, campus, and our supporting communities. Scripture and LeaderTown's six virtues: courage, wisdom, justice, temperance, humanity, and transcendence, guided our prayers. It was a meaningful opportunity to quite literally walk our campus in prayer and ask God to shape the people who live, learn, work, serve, support and lead here.

There is still much ahead of us this school year.

We are preparing for another Night of Christian Leadership, where we will once again welcome a special guest to campus to help students consider what it means to faithfully follow Christ and live out their calling wherever God places them. We are also planning a Spring Break service trip, which will give students the opportunity to step outside of their normal routines, serve others together, and experience firsthand what it means to put their faith into action.

Behind each of these programs, however, are individual students. A Bible placed into someone's hands. A conversation in the hallway. A student who stops by the office for five minutes and stays for thirty. A group gathered around Scripture. A student leader discovering that leadership begins with service. A young person beginning to recognize God's presence in the ordinary details of their life.

Those moments are the heart of Campus Ministry.

And you are part of them.

Your faithful partnership gives us the resources and freedom to keep creating spaces where students can encounter Christ, ask questions, grow in faith, serve others, and discover how God might be calling them to live in the world.

Thank you for continuing to believe in ministry with college students. Thank you for investing in their lives and in the people who walk alongside them. And thank you for being a part of what God is doing here at the University of Jamestown.

We are deeply grateful.

With gratitude and blessings,

Kirstie Dobson

***Director of Campus Ministries
University of Jamestown***