**Dear Campus Ministry Supporter,**

You. Yes, you! You are amazing.

You have prayed for us and financially supported us through one of the toughest years in recent memory. Thank you for your faithfulness and generosity.

Coronavirus has obviously affected how we all work, live and worship. Because of your giving you have allowed us to continue to minister to the young adults of Eastern Washington University and even expand our ministries to more young adults.

The question: with classes online, worship in congregations moving to virtual spaces, and campus empty, ***how*** are we to minister? How can you have a ministry of presence when you can’t be present?

Lutheran Campus Ministry at EWU with our partners at ELM Campus Ministry have created the *Cross Connection Box*. Pastor Alissa Bertsch, of Cheney United Methodist Church, and ELM co-founder, spoke of how much she, and others, love picking out and receiving subscription boxes. How better to get resources into the hands of those who need it?

Through our regular program funding we are offering these boxes free to EWU students. We are also encouraging individuals and congregations to donate funds to get boxes to the young adults in their circles. Please visit our website: [www.lcmewu.com](http://www.lcmewu.com) to donate and order for a special young person – or for yourself!

We developed monthly themes around current topics and spiritual themes. Each month a book was chosen within that theme. And items were curated to fill out the box – practical face masks to just-for-fun stickers, sweet treats to websites as food for thought.

A devotion was also included each month which we used as the basis for our first of two monthly ELM Campus Ministry Zoom meetings. We’ve explored the biblical concepts of justice and peace and even committed to acts of generosity and gratitude.

The monthly book has been used to bring congregations, clergy, and college students together to share insights, perspectives, and viewpoints on a common idea. We’ve explored faithful voting with Thou Shalt Not Be A Jerk by Eugene Cho, Gratitude by Diana Butler Bass, and Learning to Walk in the Dark by Barbara Brown Taylor.

We’ve got more topics and book studies waiting in the wings. Contact Pastor Arianna if you, your friends, family and congregation would like to join in the conversation.

But the main way we’ve been keeping in touch with students has been through Zoom, the online video conferencing program which seems to be all but universal. Students and alumni of our ministry have gathered to pray, study, share about life in COVID lock down.

As cats and dogs wander into view we’ve shared pet’s personalities and names. We hear stories about work from the Amazon distribution center to Pizza Hut. Most importantly we’ve maintained and built community. Professors to treasure or avoid, how to deal with family with different political views, finding employment in a pandemic, online classes and their challenges and joys, isolating from friends and family, how to live authentically and acknowledge systems of racism, how to talk about values instead of political party affiliation.

ELM Campus ministry is the only truly open, affirming, and welcoming campus ministry at EWU. We provide a place for young people to be their whole selves, created in the image of God, commissioned in baptism to serve our neighbors.

And we invite questions! Young people are hungry for community, for a place to explore, to question the pat answers they have received growing up. Above all we feed bodies and souls with conversation and community.

Until that time when we can gather at the same table again, we reach out to each other through safe ways. And this is possible because of your faithful support. We covet your prayers as individuals, groups and congregations. We thank you for referring young people to our ministry and any Lutheran Campus ministry nationwide. We are so grateful for your financial generosity, especially when budgets are so tight for so many, when special fundraisers have been cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Thank you for your partnership in ministering with and to this unique group of Christ-followers.

Yours in Christ,

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