



CAMPUS MINISTRY MATTERS

THE NEWSLETTER OF LUTHERAN MINISTRIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION OF NYC

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Introducing: The Vine NYC College Ministry

For decades, Lutheran campus ministry has been transforming the lives of students in New York City through the work of Lutheran Ministries in Higher Education. LMHE is now proud to announce an innovative new ministry to students: *The Vine NYC*.

What is The Vine NYC?

The Vine NYC is a citywide ministry to Lutheran college and graduate students. As part of The Vine, students from campuses across New York City gather regularly for worship, meaningful conversation, fellowship, and service. The community meets at Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church in Manhattan. Participants come from a wide range of backgrounds, neighborhoods and schools.

The Vine launched in 2014 and it has been growing ever since. In 2015, LMHE called

Local Campus "Branches"

In addition to citywide gatherings, The Vine also has local campus or neighborhood-based "branches" where students can connect more deeply in their local settings.

Among The Vine's branches is Queens College, where students meet twice weekly for Bible Study and fellowship. Another active Vine branch is LaMP—Lutherans, Methodists and Presbyterians— at Columbia University. This ecumenical group gathers each week for worship and a meal. Other branches include Westchester County students and students at Advent Lutheran Church in



Vine students come together from all across the greater New York area

The Vine NYC is a community of Lutheran college and graduate students from across the city who gather in Manhattan for worship, fellowship and service.

Why Citywide Ministry?

In a city with dozens of universities and thousands of students, LMHE asked itself how it could serve a broader population of students more effectively. The Vine was born of a desire to share the gospel with all kinds of students - from elite universities to community colleges, design schools to liberal arts colleges. Thanks to great public transportation and student enthusiasm, The Vine brings together students who might never otherwise meet to worship God and build an authentic, loving faith community.

The Rev. Becca Seely to serve as pastor of The Vine and Executive Director of LMHE.

Manhattan. LMHE is working to cultivate more branches throughout New York City.

To learn more, visit us online at thevinenyc.org or on Facebook at [facebook.com/thevinenewyork](https://www.facebook.com/thevinenewyork).

Student Profile: Peter Swanson



Peter Swanson,
Columbia University '16

“It’s so important to be able to do more than worship behind closed doors — to be change and do good.”

Peter Swanson is a Senior at Columbia University. He is an active student leader in The Vine NYC, a regular participant in LaMP, the Vine’s ecumenical branch at Columbia, and a board member for LMHE.

Where are you from?

I grew up outside Cheney Washington, a small town of about 5000 in eastern Washington state.

Did you grow up in a faith community?

Yes. I grew up Lutheran. I loved being involved with Lutheran Youth Organization leadership training camps in high school. I also served on my synod council and even got to represent my synod at the Churchwide Assembly in 2009.

What brought you to New York City?

I transferred to Columbia from Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington as a Junior to enroll in Columbia’s Civil Engineering program. I love buildings and structures and I want to make them myself.

You are clearly a really busy guy. What got you connected to The Vine and what keeps you coming back?

As I go through my weeks, I’ve begun to realize that being part of a faith community gives you a sense of higher purpose throughout your entire life. I like being part of a Lutheran community like The Vine because I am a fan of Martin Luther and I like examining the intellectual and critical side of faith.

What is it like to be part of LaMP, the ecumenical branch of The Vine that brings together Lutherans, Methodists and Presbyterians at Columbia?

It’s awesome. Before this, I had never really worshipped with people from other Protestant traditions. I think it’s really great to get to see a more diverse perspective on faith. I really enjoy hearing some of the different insights that Presbyterian and Methodist students bring to the table.

Why is The Vine important to you?

I like being part of a community within this huge, connected city. It’s great to get outside of Columbia and meet new people.

You are on the LMHE Board. What is your vision for college ministry in New York?

Somewhere you are excited to go and you know that you’re going to be replenished and have the chance to do that for other people too. Somewhere where young adults can live out their faith and flex their vocational muscle. I think it is so important to be able to do more than worship behind closed doors — to be change and do good.

What is a favorite memory of The Vine so far?

Last year, during one of the Vine Gatherings, we all made pizzas together. It was so great just to be able to get to know each other better and connect in community. It was a lot of fun.

TRIVIA PARTY!

Save the Date: Trivia Night

Are you smarter than a college student?

Join LMHE for Trivia Night and find out!

On Friday, February 26, LMHE will be hosting its first annual Trivia Night Fundraiser for The Vine NYC at Gustavus Adolphus Church in Manhattan.

Teams of six will compete for the glory of being named Citywide Trivia Champion.

This will be a wonderful night to enjoy fun and games, learn more about The Vine NYC, meet some of our students and support this important ministry. We hope to see you there!

Are You Smarter than a College Student? : LMHE Trivia Night Fundraiser

Friday, Feb. 26, 8-10pm

Gustavus Adolphus Church,
155 E. 22nd St. Manhattan

Learn more and register at
thevinenyc.org/trivia-night

LMHE Calls Pastor & Executive Director

In May 2015, the Synod Council of the ELCA's Metropolitan New York Synod called Becca Seely to serve as pastor of The Vine NYC and Executive Director of LMHE. Seely is charged with serving and growing The Vine community. She leads worship and programs and provides pastoral care for students.

Raised in a secular home in St. Louis, MO, Seely came to Christian faith during her own college years and was baptized as an adult in a Lutheran congregation in Brooklyn, where she moved after graduation. After working in the non-profit field for a num-

ber of years, Seely discerned a call to ministry and headed to Yale Divinity School, where she completed an MDiv and served as a campus ministry intern. She also studied at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary.

Seely is passionate about building community, empowering students for service and relating faith to real life. "I am delighted to be serving The Vine community," Seely said. "Student years are so transformative. I feel blessed to be able to walk with students as



Pastor Becca Seely was ordained August 8, 2015 in Brooklyn.

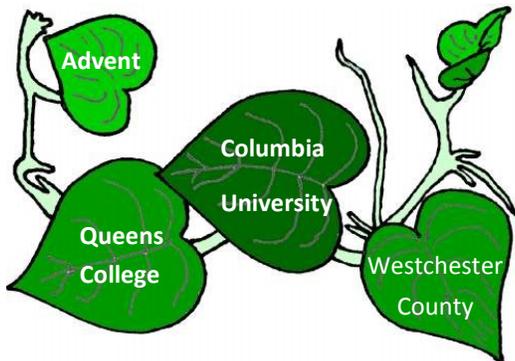
they grapple with big questions of meaning and purpose."

Pastor Seely was ordained in August 2015. This is her first call.

"I feel blessed to be able to walk with students as they grapple with big questions of meaning and purpose."

The Vine NYC: Fast Facts

4 Branches



Gathering Locally

An Average of

15

students attend each Vine Gathering

Students From



10 Universities

- Columbia University/Barnard College
- Concordia College
- Fashion Institute of Technology
- Manhattan School of Music
- Marymount Manhattan College
- Pratt Institute
- Queens College
- Rutgers University
- Suffolk County Community College
- Union Theological Seminary

Students Live in 5 Counties



Brooklyn

Manhattan

Long Island

Queens

Westchester



Lutheran Ministries in Higher Education

PO Box 250813
New York, NY 10025

Web: www.thevinenyc.org
Email: pastor@thevinenyc.org

Lutheran Ministries in Higher Education, New York City, Inc. is a pan-Lutheran, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. With its roots reaching back to 1912, LMHE was founded in 1972 to establish, maintain, support, develop and promote Christian ministry to students in the greater New York City area. Flowing from the Lutheran tradition, the mission of LMHE is to build a welcoming community of college students for the purpose of forming servants of Christ through worship, pastoral care, study and spiritual friendship.

Campus Ministry in NYC Needs Your Support

Dear friends,

Campus ministry matters.

Not only does it help mold young people into gospel-centered leaders for tomorrow's church and world, it also makes a huge impact in students' lives today. The young adults I meet are hungry for the gospel and hungry for a peer faith community in which they can explore big questions. Many college students in New York City are trying to find their place in an often overwhelming new home. They are longing for connection in a community where they can be accepted for who they are and hear the good news that God loves them unconditionally. Students across the city are hungry for a community like The Vine.

The Vine NYC is growing and blossoming beyond our wildest hopes. It is touching many lives already. But we need your help to reach more students and to help our

branches take root on more campuses and in more boroughs.

We need your support. The reality is that we can't do this work alone. We rely on your prayers. We rely on you to spread the word to the students in your community. And we rely on your financial support. Will you help us make sure that this generation of students in NYC have a transformative campus ministry experience? Thank you for your support of this

vital ministry. Together, we can create a bright future for Lutheran campus ministry in New York.

Yours in gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pastor Becca".

Pastor Becca Seely
Executive Director, LMHE
Pastor, The Vine NYC

Will you help us to strengthen and grow The Vine NYC?

To make a gift, please send a check made out to
"Lutheran Ministries in Higher Education" to:
PO Box 250813, New York, NY 10025

OR

Give securely online at www.thevinenyc.org/support

Thank you for your generous support!