



# COLLEGE MINISTRY MATTERS

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# Lutherans, Methodists and Presbyterians Partner for Ministry in Morningside Heights



*“We light this candle to signify that we are entering into sacred space together.”*

It is with these words that Pastors Becca Seely and Siobhan Sargent open each meeting of LaMP, the new ecumenical Protestant campus ministry putting down roots in Morningside Heights. LaMP, otherwise known as Lutherans Methodists and Presbyterians, is a ministry collaboration of The Vine NYC, Broadway Presbyterian Church, Advent Lutheran Church and St. Paul & St. Andrew United Methodist Church.

The Lutheran Church and its Methodist and Presbyterian neighbors have long, proud histories of providing campus ministry to students in the Morningside Heights neigh-



LaMP students gather on comfy couches at Broadway Presbyterian to eat and discuss faith and life on Monday evenings.

borhood of Manhattan. Over the past few years, however, many faith groups have faced challenges in accessing incoming students from their traditions on campus. Facing similar problems, local clergy got to talking and realized something simple and wonderful: *we can do this ministry better together.*

Out of these conversations, LaMP was born. Beginning in fall 2015, Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian students have been meeting every Monday night at Broadway Presbyterian Church, directly across from Columbia University. What began with just a handful of students has grown to a regular group of around a dozen undergraduate and graduate students gathering together each week for dinner, prayer, conversation around

scripture and Holy Communion. Seely, The Vine’s pastor, and Sargent, Associate Pastor at St. Paul & St. Andrew, lead the group. The three sponsoring congregations provide hearty meals for hungry students longing for a taste of home. Currently, LaMP students attend Columbia University, Barnard College, Manhattan School of Music

and Union Theological Seminary. A number of LaMP students are also active in The Vine NYC’s citywide student gatherings. LaMP serves as The Vine’s branch in uptown Manhattan.

In addition to the weekly dinner worship, LaMP has also hosted all-ages Pub Theology, social gatherings, and a weekend retreat upstate.



LaMP students having fun at the weekly dinner during Mardi Gras and the Lunar New Year.

LaMP also hosts Midnight Study Breaks open to all local students during exam periods. These events at Broadway Presbyterian offer snacks, live music and the opportunity for students to request prayers from partner congregations. Each study break has drawn over one hundred students.

This first year has been a great start for LaMP, which is fast growing into a thriving ecumenical community.

## Student Profile: Ellen Trubey



Ellen Trubey  
Pratt Institute '16

*“When you are in college, you are going through a difficult transition... It really helps to have a supportive faith community.”*

*Ellen Trubey is a Senior at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. She will graduate in May with a B.F.A. in Communication Design. Ellen is an active leader in The Vine NYC, The Vine’s communication coordinator and a board member for LMHE.*

**Where are you from?** I grew up in a small town in Southern California called Upland.

**Did you grow up in a faith community?** I grew up in a Lutheran household, where ever since I can remember we attended church every week. I was baptized, confirmed and attended youth group every Wednesday. I saw myself as a Christian, but when I got to college, I did not quite know how to go about being

involved, since I attended a secular college in the middle of a busy new city.

**What was the transition to being a student in NYC like for you?** During my first years of school, I wasn’t involved in church at all. Overall, people at Pratt are more focused on their assignments and art than religious life, which was hard for me as a Freshman. Becoming part of The Vine has allowed me to reconnect to a Christian community and my faith.

**What role has The Vine played in your life during college?** When you are in college, you are going through a difficult transition from living at home where your parents are more or less in charge. Then you get to school and you become a lot more independent. I definitely went through a difficult time trying to figure out what I wanted from my life and how I would make decisions on my own. It

really helps to have The Vine as a supportive faith community where I can explore life, find out who I am and grow into Christian faith that is truly my own.

**What is a favorite Vine memory?** I think it has to be the very first Vine event back in 2014. It was all an experiment then—I could not have imagined at that point what a wonderful community The Vine would grow into and how involved I would become.

**What are your plans after graduation?** I work part-time as a nanny for a wonderful family. I will continue to do that while I freelance as an illustrator and independent artist. My Senior Thesis is a small children’s wear collection and I hope to get my clothes and designs into stores one day.

**Congratulations and Good Luck, Ellen!**



## Table Talk: Vine Students get Wired on Coffee and Theology

**College students spend a lot more time than the average person discussing philosophical issues.** On our campuses in NYC, these conversations are happening all the time and yet, they are seldom viewed through the lens of faith.

Table Talk, The Vine’s monthly coffee shop theology gathering, aims to change that. At Table Talk, Vine students take time out of their Sunday afternoons to sip a latte, eat something

sweet and talk seriously about God, religion and the big issues in our world today. So far, topics have included “Public and Private Faith,” “Racism and Structural Sin,” “Religion and Violence” and, most recently, “God is Love,” where students explored the question: “What does God have to do with my love life?”

At Table Talk, students ask tough questions, dig deeper into Christian tradition, and argue good naturedly about



Zach Dean (Queens College '17) shares a deep thought over pie.

the meaning of life. “The students are so sharp and so curious,” said Pastor Becca Seely, “I learn so much from them every time we meet.”

# Vine Trivia Night: Competing for a Cause

*Are YOU smarter than a college student?*

Nearly one hundred people strove to answer this question in the affirmative when they gathered for The Vine NYC's Trivia Night on Friday, February 26.

Trivia teams from all over the New York area gathered in the newly renovated parish hall of Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church in Manhattan for a night of fun, food and fierce competition. Master of Ceremonies and LMHE Board President, Pastor Paul Block, guided teams through seven rounds of trivia questions. Categories included "Martin/Luther," "NYC History," and "Name the Dog from the Movie," among others.

Trivia Night brought together many generous people and raised over \$2500 for The Vine NYC. Teams from congregations and organizations came out to support The Vine and win big, including Immanuel in Queens, Trinity Lower East Side, Christ,



The winning team shows off their championship trophy, which was designed and built by Vine student Peter Swanson (Columbia '16).

Gustavus Adolphus, Advent and Our Saviour's Atonement in Manhattan, St. Stephens in Brooklyn, and Pinecrest Lutheran Leadership Ministries. A Vine NYC student team and a team from The Vine's Queens College branch competed as well. The event took place at Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church, which generously donated use of their space, as they also do each month for Vine worship.

At the end of the night, a championship trophy was awarded to the highest scoring team, along with trophies for best team name, most sportsman-

like behavior, highest scoring congregation and other, somewhat silly categories.

"We are really grateful that so many folks from all across our church came out to have fun and support college ministry together," Pastor Block commented, "It was truly a joyful night."

Didn't get to play this year? Itching for another chance to prove yourself? Never fear. Vine Trivia Night will be back and better than ever in 2017!

**Nearly 100 competitors matched wits at The Vine's 2016 Trivia Night.**



Competitors from Christ Lutheran in Manhattan rack their brains to come up with the right answer.

## Branch Grant Applications Now Open

Beginning April 1, 2016, Lutheran Ministries in Higher Education is accepting applications for Branch Grants to support local college ministry initiatives in the greater New York City area.

The Vine NYC gathers college and graduate students as a citywide community and in local "Vine Branches." These branches are neighborhood or campus-based student ministries led by local congregations or student leaders with the support of The Vine NYC.

Branch grants exist to provide short-term financial support to local congregations or student groups seeking to start up Vine

Branches on a nearby campus or in their neighborhood. This is a great opportunity for congregations looking to serve students in their area or for students who would like to organize a branch at their school. Vine Branches are connected to the citywide Vine NYC ministry, receive collaborative support and participate in the life of The Vine NYC community.

Previous recipients include:

**Immanuel Lutheran Church** in Whitestone, Queens, which received a grant to redevelop a ministry at Queens College in Flushing, Queens;

**Advent Lutheran Church** in

Manhattan, which received a grant to support ministry to the colleges in Morningside Heights and an Advent student group.

### Vine Branch Grants

*Applications available online at [thevinenyc.org/branch-grants](http://thevinenyc.org/branch-grants)*

*Applications due: May 15, 2016*

New applicants are encouraged. Vine Branch Grants will be awarded in amounts up to \$5000 and may be renewable on an annual basis.



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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.

In 2014, LMHE launched The Vine NYC college ministry, a citywide Christian community for college and graduate students from campuses across the greater New York City area.

## What Can You Do to Support The Vine NYC?

**Spread the Word!** Bring this newsletter to church and pass it around. Invite Pastor Becca to visit your congregation and talk about The Vine NYC.



**Know a student?** Tell them about The Vine and send their contact info to Pastor Becca so she can reach out.

**Make a one-time or recurring donation.** The Vine NYC relies on your financial support to make this ministry possible.

Give online at [thevinenyc.org/support](http://thevinenyc.org/support) or Send a check made out to LMHE to PO Box 250813, New York, NY 10025



**Like The Vine on Facebook.**

**Pray for our students!**