

Fostering connections

– *Pastor Jocelynn Jurkovich Hughes*

One of the things I appreciate about being a part of campus ministry is that The Belfry is de facto a member of several different networks that connect us to people who are similar to and different from ourselves as Christians.

At UC Davis, the University Religious Council (URC), a network of religious organizations, meets quarterly with the Student Life Staff on campus. This enables us to build relationships as ministry leaders and with the staff on campus so that we can better collaborate to meet the students' needs.

And, we're also a part of the Interfaith Campus Council (ICC), which is a subset of the URC, composed of student organizations that collaborate on programming for our students in an interfaith/multifaith setting. Participation in the ICC allows us to have closer connections with our fellow Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Unitarian friends. This has been particularly important this year, as the Davis mosque was attacked in a hate incident. The Muslim Student Association immediately reached out to the ICC and we showed our support with our friendship, dollars, and prayers. We also crafted an Interfaith Statement of Unity, declaring for the entire UCD community what we stand for as religious people on campus, and this was a powerful statement to make in the



face of fear and uncertainty for so many students on our campus.

Additionally, we are part of larger networks of Lutheran and

Episcopal campus ministries. Each year, we have attended "Prov" – the annual Province VIII Campus Ministry Conference. This year, we hosted "Prov" here at UCD. About 60 people traveled from all over California, Arizona, and Washington to

spend a weekend together in fellowship, prayer, and growing as a community. These conferences are always Spirit-filled encounters, and make the time and effort it takes to attend (or host!) worth it. I'm constantly amazed at how easily relationships are formed, and Christ is praised, and that we find renewed energy and excitement from being together in the same place at the same time.



In each of these instances – the URC, the ICC, and Prov – if we didn't participate, we would miss the ability to be in relationship with people who bring joy to our lives and challenge us as people of faith. We may find that we don't necessarily agree on everything, or that things like schedules and calendars are not the same, or our dietary needs make eating a meal together difficult. But we also get to see that we are all humans, each a child of God, each with hopes and dreams for ourselves and our loved ones. These networks give our students a chance to learn these lessons too – ones which we hope they will continue to carry and foster as they continue in their adult and professional lives.

College is a microcosm of the larger world, so by learning to live together here on campus, the students are learning invaluable lessons that will shape them as people throughout their lives. And being able to bring our unique lens as Lutherans and Episcopalians to these discussions adds a depth of perspective that if we weren't here it would be a tragic loss for everyone. I continue to be so grateful that The Belfry is able to be present on this campus, at this time, for these students. **Thank you for being a part of our ministry**, part of the larger network of support and connection that enables us to be here.

Student in the spotlight: Kessy Paulson

Meet Kessy, a senior at CSU Sacramento who's been part of The Belfry for seven years – first as a Sacramento City College Student, and now as a Sac State student. Here's a little more about her in her own words.

Name: Kessy Paulson

Hometown: Davis!

Year: 7/super senior

Home Church:

Lutheran Church of the Incarnation (LCI)

What you are

studying and why: I'm

a child development major and a theatre minor. I have always enjoyed working with children and people in general so being a child development major seemed to be a logical major to study with the careers that interest me. The theatre minor is more for the fact that theatre has been a passion of mine for many years and I wanted more of an education in it.



Why did you decide to attend Sac City, and then transfer to Sac State? I went to community college before transferring for a number of reasons. One reason is that at the end of my time in high school I was interested in the culinary field and the community college offered an excellent culinary program. Secondly, it was more affordable to take general education classes at Sac City before transferring to Sac State.

Why is campus ministry important? It's extremely important for so many reasons. Campus ministry offers a sense of community that can sometimes be hard to find while in college. On a personal level, the Belfry was a vital community while I was studying at Sac City before transferring. Campus ministries also combat some of the negative stigmas that the church has accumulated over the years by being welcoming to all students of all demographics, whether students are from other faiths or part of the LGBT community. The fact that campus ministries like the Belfry are part of interfaith events is also what makes such ministries so important.

You've been a part of The Belfry for awhile. Do you have a favorite "Belfry memory?" I have so many good memories of the Belfry it's hard to choose just one memory, but I'll stick to just one. One favorite memory is when my birthday fell on a Wednesday and during dinner after the service everyone wished me a happy birthday.

Hobbies: I have a few hobbies that include crocheting, bike riding, video games, traveling and yoga.

Other activities in college: I enjoy being a part of the different theatre clubs at Sac State. I also enjoy going to the gym on the Sac State campus. It's always enjoyable being part of Belfry events when I can.

Hopes/dreams for the Belfry: I hope that the Belfry remains the positive community that it is and is able to reach even more students in the future.

What you want to be when you grow up: I want to be able to help people in some way and to hopefully travel all over the world. How I'm actually going to do those things has yet to be set in stone.

Belfry Fiesta!

Thank you to everyone who supported our spring fundraiser, our "Belfry Fiesta!" It was a wonderful evening with good food, good music by Mariachi Puente, and great raffle prizes. Our Board did a wonderful job organizing it, led by Dr. Sheri Reynolds and Craig Lundgren, a good time was had by all! Thank you to Lutheran Church of the Incarnation for hosting the event! You can see pictures and video on our website. We hope to see you next year!



LUTHERAN EPISCOPAL CAMPUS MINISTRY *at The Belfry*

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Excerpt from the LEVN blog: Thankful for 2016 and Optimistic for 2017

2017 is here! A lot of us agree that last year was rough and we couldn't wait for the year to end. I certainly felt that way. I just wanted 2016 to be over but also felt anxiety for what 2017 would look like. I had mentally checked out by the end of November and noticed how it had become easier for me to list all the "not so good" things that occurred than to acknowledge the many times I had been blessed.

That way of thinking started to change during the first week of December. Something like an alarm clock went off in my head. That alarm clock helped me realize that I was heading down the wrong path. I was making choices that negatively affected my relationships and personal growth. This feeling of "waking up" helped me seek ways to start taking steps in the right direction.

Last month I may have only taken one step but I'm happy because the first step can be the most difficult. I spent the first day of 2017 at Point Reyes National Seashore with a great friend. It was a little cold but that didn't stop me from getting my feet in the water. Waves are very calming for me and being at the beach helped me clear my mind so that I could reflect on last year.

The self-improvement work I started in December has been helping me become more appreciative of everything that happened last year. 2016 was rough but it was also very beautiful.

Things about 2016 that I'm grateful for: Graduating from Cal, my parents becoming Legal Permanent Residents (LPR), new addition to the family, friendships & new brothers, LEVN and spiritual growth.

Graduating was a huge achievement for me and my family but I haven't been good about seeing it as an accomplishment... Cal was not an easy journey. I've been recalling the multiple obstacles I faced during the first two years of undergrad when I was undocumented. At the time, AB540 made it possible for me to go to college because I wasn't required to pay out of state tuition. In-state tuition was significantly less but it still presented financial difficulties because there was no financial assistance and I couldn't legally work in the US. I was working hard to succeed in my classes despite the legal and financial barriers I was facing. I remember the pain I felt after completing my first year of college when my parents and I thought that I wouldn't be able to return to Cal. Somehow, we made it work. Thankfully I became an LPR by my third year of college and that's when things got a lot easier...

After 24 years of living in the shadows, my parents went from being undocumented to legal permanent residents. Even though I have experienced what it means and feels to be undocumented in the US, I cannot speak on their behalf because their experiences are unique. All I know is that they've been incredibly hardworking and honest people since we

arrived to the US in 1992. Despite the obstacles they faced, my parents did everything they could to provide for me and my sisters. My parents were so excited to show me their LPR cards when I visited them during the Christmas weekend. They couldn't stop smiling and said that they still couldn't believe it. ...This Christmas I could see how they were a little more at peace...

I'm thankful for the "not so good" experiences from 2016 because they pushed me to communicate more with God. I know that I shouldn't have waited for negative experiences to motivate me to seek God but I'm glad that I have been able to create a positive and healthy experience with Him. I recently went through my journal entries from 2016 and noticed how in most of them I wrote to God for guidance. God has been there for me

and heard me this summer when I was in a dark place. God helped me find LEVN, a place that I desperately needed. LEVN has helped me develop professional skills while encouraging me to continue my spiritual growth. I didn't have the best relationship with God when I was younger but I'm thankful that that's no longer the case.

The end of 2016 was scary but there were many great things throughout. Going to Point Reyes helped me remember how much I was blessed last year and set goals for 2017. My main goal for this year is to continue making healthy decisions and be more helpful to others. I'm learning to adopt a healthy lifestyle because by doing that then everything else will hopefully fall into place. I am shocked to see how this year of service is flying by and it does get me a little sad to think that it'll end in July. I will make the best of the time that I have left in the program while preparing myself for post-LEVN life. 2017 will present challenges but I will not lose hope. It'll be a great year. I just need to take it one day at a time.

"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"
(Philippians 4:13)

(for more from Leo and other LEVN volunteers, see <http://www.levn.org/category/volunteerblog/>)



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Memoriam: Dr. Jeanne George

We are sad to share that our Financial Secretary, Dr. Jeanne George, has passed away. Jeanne, Professor Emerita of the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine and active member of St. Martin's, was a special person who served The Belfry for many years with diligence, intelligence, and great love. We will deeply miss her wisdom, gifts, and her smile. Our prayers are with her family and friends.

"Give rest, O Christ, to your servant with your saints. Where sorrow and pain are no more; neither sighing but life everlasting."



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