

Others count at chapel on mall

By Rebecca Brito

The University Lutheran Chapel—the Missouri Synod's "Chapel on the Mall"—is responsible to more than 1,000 Lutheran students and others in the University community.

That "and others" is stressed in what Pastor A. J. Norden called "the five main objectives" of the center.

The objectives are in his words to gain and regain students and others for Christ (evangelism); to keep students and others in Christ through the Word and the sacraments (worship services); to nurture students and others to be better disciples and stewards (training in "churchmanship"); to encourage Christian relationships through companionship (small groups and social activities) and to express concern for others in all their needs (social action and outreach).

Each of these objectives is reflected in the programs organized through the Chapel on the Mall, according to Norden's associate Pastor, Ray Waetjen.

In addition to Sunday morning worship services and an evening fellowship group, the chapel sponsors a Christian doctrine study group and scriptural overview studies each semester.

Waetjen said his special interests are in working with small groups.

"After all, the church started out as a small group movement," he said. "Twelve men, with Christ in the middle. I try to maintain that concept of a small group centered around Christ."

He currently is involved with a group he calls a Covenant Community—about eight people who make a commitment, or covenant, for personal growth in their potential as human beings.

He and his wife also have conducted "preparation for marriage" groups, working in the spring semester with couples who plan to marry in the summer.

Waetjen called his personal ministry a relational one; that is, he believes his effectiveness as a pastor is

determined by how well he communicates with people, he said.

"We think communicate with words, and we are so concerned with finding the right words," he said. "But words have no meaning if they're not expressed in personal relationships," he said.

"I could easily spend my entire ministry relating to people at a superficial level," he said. "But I would never really know anyone, or be known."

Somewhat in contrast to Waetjen, who said he "operates out of a strong background in the social sciences," Norden said he felt his style of ministry is best reflected in the five objectives mentioned earlier.

"I have to think more in terms of the 1,200 people we work with here," Norden said. "Ray (Waetjen) feels he is more effective in small groups, but I must consider the larger congregation."

Both pastors said they believed their styles are complementary.

Neither said he is sure whether interest in religious matters has risen noticeably in recent months.

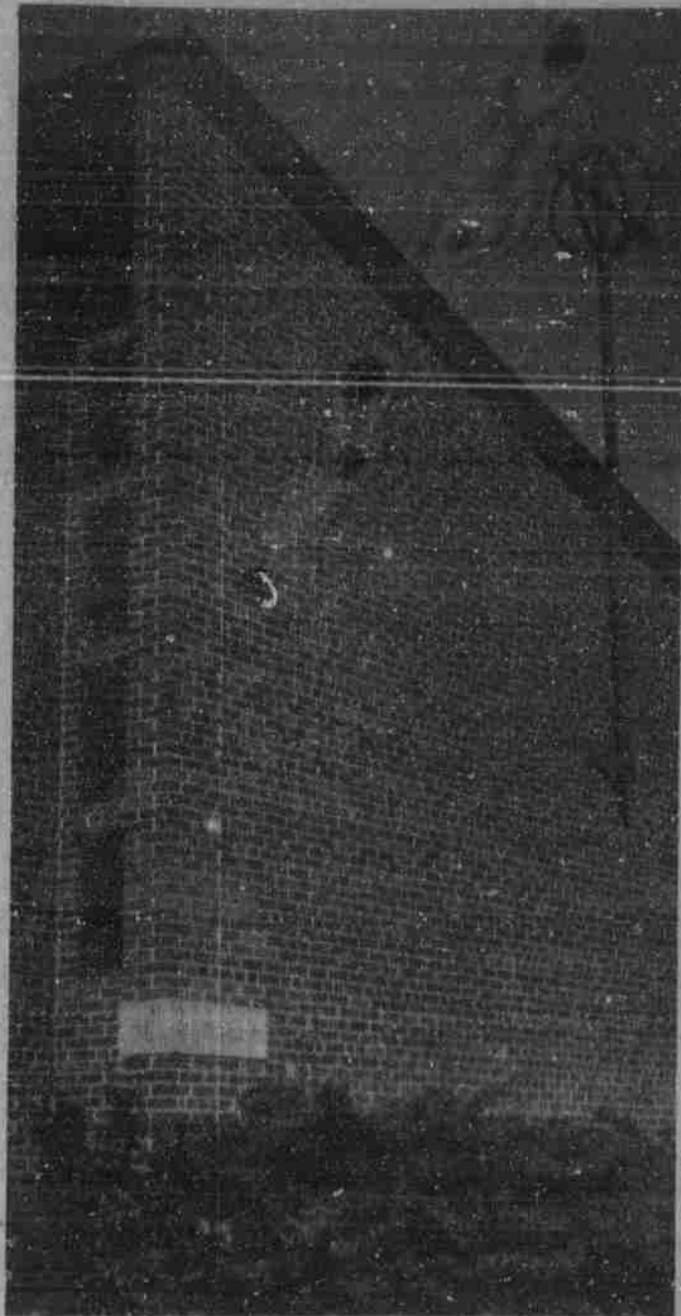
"There seems to be an increase," Waetjen said. "But it may just be that I hadn't noticed such activity before. I spent several years in a rural Illinois community before coming here, and it was rather isolated."

Norden, who has been at the University Lutheran Chapel for 23 years, said he didn't find the increase in interest "overwhelming."

"There is at least as much (religious activity) now as there was several years ago (at UNL)," he said. "Considering the turmoil and anxiety in the world today, I praise the Lord that the interest is as high as it is."

Norden said he has observed that students now seem to be more reliable and mature than they were two or three years ago.

"I am very pleased with what I see," he said. "They (students) have come a long way in terms of responsibility."



University Lutheran Chapel on the Centennial Mall.

Analysis . . .

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Under the bill, student fees could have been collected to pay for "direct and primary educational purposes" as determined by the school. Under his plan, students would still contribute about \$36 in fees for University Health Center support and to repay interest on capital construction bonds.

One issue legislators couldn't swallow was alcohol. The Unicameral, with leadership provided by State Sen. Ernie Chambers, voted 33-13 to kill the bill that would have allowed alcohol to be sold and consumed on campus.

The argument usually given by senators who voted to kill LB783 was that the Board of Regents, and not the Unicameral, was responsible for approving the liquor on campus plan. If the regents had endorsed the bill (and they didn't; they voted 7-1 against it), most senators said they could have considered the measure in light of the favorable recommendation, thus improving the bill's chances of success.

Late in the session, State Sen. Terry Carpenter, a candidate for lieutenant governor, introduced LB133 which would have merged the state colleges at Peru, Chadron, Kearney and Wayne with the NU system. Two separate governing bodies—one for the state colleges and one for the University—would have been set up.

Carpenter said State Sen. Leslie Stull of Alliance effectively killed the bill that would have been a shot in the arm for the failing state college system.

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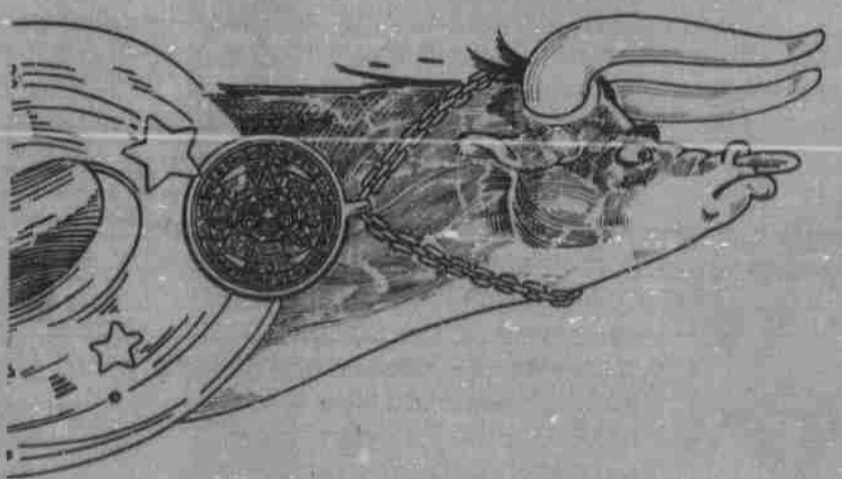
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