

Chapel Hill Churches

Religion in Chapel Hill a 'special kind of animal'

By Kevin Meredith
Staff Writer

Although religion may seem hopelessly irrelevant against the backdrop of frat parties, never ending assignments and the rigors of being on your own, you will find religious organizations in Chapel Hill to be a special kind of animal.

The following description of churches and foundations around the University of North Carolina campus in Chapel Hill is far from complete. Because of the constraints of time and space, many deserving churches and programs have been left out.

But a more complete review of organizations, on campus or off, can be done now that you are in Chapel Hill.

Students have been questioning, doubting and growing for almost two centuries at UNC, and the churches and foundations that have survived have done so through open-mindedness and respect for what students have to offer.

But the students, in turn, must recognize what these institutions have to offer. Of course, what is written here barely scratches the surface, and there is no substitute for finding out about it firsthand.

Newman Catholic Student Center

The Newman Catholic Student Center, at 218 Pittsboro St., a block west of campus, is particularly geared toward the college student, Catholic or otherwise.

The center is named after John Cardinal Newman, a 19th century British thinker and cardinal in the Catholic church who believed the years one spends in college can be challenging and difficult, and the church should be a part of them.

There are Newman centers near many colleges and universities in the United States and throughout the world.

Dale Renguette, a secretary at the center, describes the programs as being spiritual, social or based on interaction with the larger

community.

For example, a Bible study, a prayer group every Sunday at 7 p.m. and a variety of retreats are available for spiritual needs.

Student Night, beginning with a meal Wednesday at 5:30, parties and an intramural team are some of the social programs of the Newman Center. After dinner on Student Night, student or guest speakers, or even prisoners singing in a Gospel quartet, present the program.

Community-wide activities include student-faculty get-togethers, an adopt a parent program, in which students are matched with local families, and programs to address community needs.

Services at the center are held Saturday at 5:15 p.m., and Sunday at 9:15 a.m., 11 a.m. and 9 p.m.

Two student ministers on campus oversee student programs. This year, the ministers will be Cathy Rusim and Roger Schlegel.

Cathy Rusim, a senior business major at UNC-Chapel Hill, describes the center as "a real supportive place, a community . . . where people can be themselves."

Cathy, who played softball for the center's intramural team last year, added, "It offers a different perspective from the pressures of school."

Father Tim O'Connor serves the center as priest and considers his ministry a unique one. "My ministry begins where most minister's end — at the end of the day."

Father Tim, as he is known to others at the center, says he aims to help students through counseling, ministry, special programs and simply by being there.

Concerning the special needs of college students, he says, "You realize that there's a lot more going on than studies during those years."

"I would consider myself a moderate," he says. "While I hold to the principles, if a student can't reach those principles, that's okay."

Although the Newman Center was established specifically for students, many non-students belong. "Being

around students creates a very stimulating atmosphere" for them, Father Tim explains.

On Sunday, August 25 at 1 p.m., the Newman Center will hold a picnic for all new and returning students. The Center's first Student Night will be held Wednesday, August 28.

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

The earliest Lutheran activity in Chapel Hill has been traced to 1911, when J. L. Morgan, a missionary from Raleigh, made pastoral calls to a few students on campus.

Nowadays, Lutheran activity claims its own church, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, and a congregation of students, faculty and townfolk.

Larry Hartsell, campus pastor at the church, believes that students represent special needs for the church to fill. "Students come to Carolina not only to learn, but to learn about themselves," Hartsell explains.

Hartsell, who has served at Trinity Lutheran for three years, was a student at the University of Georgia when, he says, "campus ministry helped me. The people in campus ministry took me in. They enabled me to make a new start. That's the function of campus ministry."

Hartsell says that some students at UNC-Chapel Hill "get caught up in the perfectionism trap," believing they must be perfect academically and socially, and some come to get good grades without getting a good education. These are the special problems of the students that he tries to address.

Hartsell describes Lutheranism as based on salvation through grace. "Our lives aren't built upon living up to any legal code. What we do is out of appreciation for God, not fear," he says.

Kathy Franklin, a graduate student in art and teaching, says Holy Trinity's Campus Center "gives you a place to meet. It's a nice place to get comfortable."

Last year, Campus Center activ-

ities included Friday night movies, informal Wednesday night dinners and discussions ranging from world hunger to Dante.

The Campus Center also has couches, a television and piano for students who just want to study or relax.

Holy Trinity, at 300 E. Rosemary Street, a block north of campus, will

be hosting a Welcome to Carolina Party on Friday, August 23 at 7 p.m. Pizza and a movie are planned.

On Sunday, August 25, a free cookout will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. Ongoing activities include Fellowship Meals at 6 p.m. on Wednesdays, and worship services at 8:30 and 11 a.m. Sundays.



Tar Heel/Jonathan Serenius

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

Chapel of the Cross Episcopal Church

One of the most striking churches in Chapel Hill is the Chapel of the Cross Episcopal Church, fronted with two towers in which the bells are still rung by hand on Sundays.

Chapel of the Cross, which stands next to Morehead Planetarium on the UNC-CH campus, at 304 E. Franklin Street, is also the oldest church in Chapel Hill.

Reverend William Mercer Green, who later co-founded the University of the South at Sewanee, taught at UNC-Chapel Hill and directed construction of Chapel of the Cross. The bricks which still make up the old chapel, completed in 1848, were fired

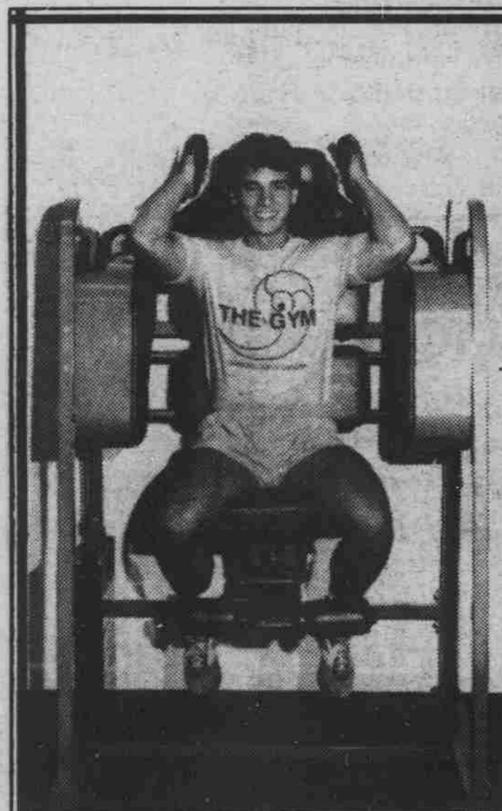
in kilns at his farm.

The newer part of Chapel of the Cross was built in the 1920s. Original plans called for a flat roof, but the University, which had a say in the matter, didn't approve. The roof was given an arch and the rest of the church was completed soon after.

The Chapel of the Cross takes its name from the pre-Revolutionary Chapel of Ease, which stood on the present site of the Carolina Inn.

Rev. David Stanford, who is the associate for campus ministry at Chapel of the Cross, feels that students are a unique group because they are feeling a search of identity and place.

"You don't get into this community unless you excel. The pressures



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