The Church and the Campus

For the past several decades the campus ministry has been functioning from a point of view which has severely hampered the mission of the church on the campus. The denominational campus church or foundation has incorrectly viewed itself as a mission to the campus. Such an approach has meant an enormous investment in real estate and the securing and training of a professional staff from outside of the academic community. This ministry was intended to be a denominational holding action so that students and perhaps faculty might not "lose their faith." Even a few non-Christians might be "wooed" into the fashionable campus center. One could cite examples of many dedicated campus ministers and noble attempts at ministry, but the structure itself forces the church not to the vibrant heart of the university but to the placid periphery.

The Christian academic community is an integral part of the life of the university where Jesus Christ is Lord. Therefore, the church is mission in the university, not a mission to the campus. At this stage in the history of Christ's church on the campus, a Reformed community may only be gathered if definite ecumenical relationships with a focus upon unity in mission are fostered. This can only be done by faculty and students who form the life of the university. A separate identity for the experience of nurture and worship is only a temporary arrangement until Word and Sacrament can be experienced in common pockets of fellowship throughout the university across denominational lines. In addition, the proliferation of church buildings and professional staff only further demonstrates to the university that Christ's church is divided.

One structure which attempts to recognize the fact that the church is mission would be the ordination of one or two faculty to the ministry of Word and Sacraments. Other functional roles could be met by faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates. The community could gather as part of the university in lab or lecture hall symbolizing its life within the campus.

Worship, fellowship and witness would grow out of the demands of living as Christians on the "cutting edge" of campus life. Christians would ask one another how they are to serve Christ's church in this context where he is Lord. There would not be an undue dependence upon professionals who were to "keep" students and faculty in the faith. A self-sustaining, self-governing and self-extending community would develop out of a common vocation of Christian scholarship and witness and a call to bear one another's burdens. Faculty and students would seek together "the mind of Christ" as they are confronted with intellectual, social and personal issues which demand a total response of all of their creative gifts. The crucible of life in the university department, the dorm room, or the coffee shop becomes the focal point of the Christian life. Reformed Christians will begin to seek out other Christians involved in a common task. The center of the church's life moves between the poles of fellowship-nurture and of witness within the life of the university.

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NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS (Continued from page 21)
Redeemer to the person who sacrificed to a Greek or Roman god. Some of these terms are not understandable today to people of other cultures, but these people have terms which can and must be transformed and through which the gospel must be transmitted.

Creativity in this area knows no bounds. Men have scratched the surface and a beginning has been made. Christian theologians are preparing as diligently as they can for the time men of other faiths are as desirous to dialogue as are the Christians. When that time comes, there must be people able and willing to carry on the conversation.

JOHN H. PIET

MISSION TO THE ACADEMIC COMMUNITY (Continued from page 18)
to bring knowledge and culture as trophies to him.

Converts won through preaching need instruction and encouragement to receive it. Preaching, to be effective, must be supplemented by dialogue. A more formal worship service demands the complement of smaller groups where what has been declared can be discussed. The hardest questions must be raised, faced squarely, and answered. Where personal problems cannot be solved, or even raised, in the smaller group, individual counselling is demanded.

In our ministry to the academic community our means may differ, but our goals are the same. Together we seek to make His praise glorious. Sola Gloria Dei.

CALVIN S. MALEFYT

THE CHURCH AND THE CAMPUS (Continued from page 19)
There should be room for healthy doubting and for a great deal of exploring together the "roadblocks" to effective communication of the gospel. There should be a significant process of biblical thinking taking root in this particular context. Christian witness will become genuine participation in the lives and situations of one's fellow student or colleague. The professional minister becomes "one of us" who learns to be a catalyst, an advisor, helping with biblical tools, fostering initiative and strategy in group witness but never taking the reins of the fellowship. The church has yet to try on a large scale to challenge the people of God in the university to really take seriously their identity.

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