



University Lutheran Church

604 E. Chalmers Street
Champaign, IL 61820



Grace to you and peace, from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

My name is the Rev. Michael Schuermann and I'm the called pastor of University Lutheran Church in Champaign. (We call ourselves UniLu.) We are the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod campus church here at the University of Illinois. I'm hoping that I'll soon meet you here in our beautiful Sanctuary to receive Christ's gifts of forgiveness together.

Christians Need Christ's Gifts

The most important thing for your weekly life is to gather around the Word and Supper of Christ with your Christian brothers and sisters. Jesus invites you: "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11)

We have Divine Service *every Sunday* at 10:30 a.m. We also have Sunday Bible Class at 9:30 a.m. Please make it part of your weekly schedule to come to these. And, as part of our joy of being together, we have a lunch each week at the church, following the Divine Service. Free. Lunch. And *delicious*.

Life Together at UniLu

Each week there are opportunities to gather to hear and study God's Word, to pray and sing together, and to hang out. We have ample space throughout the building for you to study. We have fast Wi-Fi. We have coffee and hot water. We have a cereal bar. The building is accessible for most of each day (more info on how that works later, when we meet in person).

I want to make sure you get UniLu Weekly Updates, so that you both know what's going on in our life together each week and are able to spiritually prepare for the coming Sunday Divine Service. We normally send out 2 weekly emails and 2-3 weekly text messages. Would you please sign up for these? You can do so by texting UNILU to 77411. You'll be asked a few questions to provide your contact info to us. (And only to us!)

Christian Life on Campus

You will be exposed to a wide variety of groups and ideas here: Both Christian and Non-Christian. You will make friends, both Christian and Non-Christian. As a faithful Christian you will also find that you have enemies. You may be invited to "non-denominational" groups and studies and worship. Frankly, there is no such thing. For example, consider Holy Baptism: every group will have a bias about what Holy Baptism is, what it does, and whether it is for every person of any age. Then think about other topics: communion and how one prepares for it; marriage and family; men and women; what is or isn't a sin; even the way to

salvation and if we play a role in it. If a group says that it doesn't matter what one believes about such things, that is in fact a significant doctrinal statement itself (and untrue).

Lutherans are not ashamed to have specific doctrines, beliefs, and statements of faith. We stand firmly on the whole teaching of the Word of God. Martin Luther famously said, "Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by clear reason...I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God." Paul wrote, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes..." (Romans 1). Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14), and Jesus desires us to believe, teach, and confess *all* that He has commanded (Matthew 28).

Please be cautious about groups and studies you get involved in. First and foremost, be attending the Divine Service and a Bible Class at UniLu. Take courage and say "no" to Sunday morning things that steal you away from the Lord's house. Then, add on other studies and groups with other Christians (it's good to have relationships with other Christians, after all). College is a *great* time to ask questions and think about why you believe what you believe. I (Pastor Schuermann) am a resource for you here. I'm glad to listen, to engage your questions and concerns, and to help you find the truth in God's Word. Please stand on the firm foundation of God's Word and Sacraments.

Wrapping Up

It's hard to overstate my hopeful expectation that I'll soon see you in the Sunday Divine Service. Please, make time to be here on your first Sunday in town. Feel free to stop by even if it's a weekday or Saturday, too. We're open 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. starting Tuesday, August 10th.

The righteous flourish like the palm tree
and grow like a cedar in Lebanon.
They are planted in the house of the Lord;
they flourish in the courts of our God.
They still bear fruit in old age;
they are ever full of sap and green,
to declare that the Lord is upright;
he is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in him. (Psalm 92)

Christ bless and keep you,

Pastor Michael Schuermann

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