



## UNIVERSITY LUTHERAN CHAPEL

"You Are Home"

10915 Strathmore Drive  
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Greetings in the Name of our Risen Lord!

The University Lutheran Chapel at UCLA has a rich story like every congregation and ministry. It has a story of passion and joy, hardship and challenge, perseverance and hope. And with every congregational story there are many chapters and transitions.

Many upstanding and Christ-centered individuals casted the vision for a campus ministry at UCLA in the 1960's and by the power of the Holy Spirit working through Christ's church, this vision came to be a reality when the chapel was built on fraternity row in 1965. Some of these individuals are still with us today. Since that time, numerous students and community members have passed through the chapel, shaping and impacting the ministry while also being impacted *by* it.

Born out of various necessities and after 53 years of dedicated service, ULC has had to re-envision its ministry these past years. In short, we needed to think through how ministry could look with needed changes to the building and even how to conduct its mission *apart* from the physical building. We examined many and various realities and possibilities of future ministry and our approach to mission. We are writing to share with you the results of this hard work.

There is a lot of emotion surrounding the building as it has played a vital role for the congregation and so I share this with deep sensitivity and appreciation to the history and story of the ministry that has taken place in and through it. We have concluded that with our current realities and resources, the amount of time, personnel, and resources needed to maintain the building has and continues to distract us from the mission to which Christ has called us. We have therefore decided to vacate the building, and have handed over full care and responsibility of the facility back over to the Pacific Southwest District Board of Directors to undergo a process to determine how to responsibly move forward with the building.

This has been a partnership between the Board of Directors and the leadership at ULC and has been done in the spirit of working together for the best. To the best of our ability, it is understood that this is the soundest path forward. Speaking on behalf of the chapel, we humbly ask that you receive this news with the trust that prayer, good thought and work has arrived us at this conclusion for the sake of Christ's mission. Again, this is a hard reality, and we know it is harder for some. We communicate this with the deepest respect for all people, particularly those with a personal history connected to the ministry of ULC through the building. There are feelings of sadness, yet also feelings of joy and excitement since there is a path forward where it is not a conclusion to the whole story of ULC but a transition and transformation! It is merely a conclusion to a long and beautiful chapter of the story.

Beyond the conclusion to conduct ministry and mission apart from a physical building, we engaged in the opportunity to think beyond ministering just to UCLA. The City of Los Angeles is the 2<sup>nd</sup> most populated city in the United States. Los Angeles County has approximately 10 million residents and is only growing. LA County has approximately 90 secular universities and colleges (including public, independent, community college, proprietary), and it has the largest community college system in the entire United States. There is only 1 intentional and fully-focused LCMS college ministry in LA County: the University Lutheran Chapel at UCLA. ULC is in a unique position to think on behalf of the county in which it resides and develop a heart for mission beyond 1 university.



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As a result, we have decided and voted to transform into the Campus Mission Coalition of Los Angeles! A coalition serves to work together with existing peoples and entities for the sake of a broad mission and common goal. In this case, the CMC-LA will work with existing LCMS congregations and saints throughout the county for the sake of college mission and ministry. We have the heart to actively engage in the mission field of LA County campuses, where a missional presence at every secular university and college would be established. This will be an initiative to revitalize and launch new campus ministries throughout the county.

We will develop faith communities that are made up of college students and local non-students passionate about college ministry. These individuals will be connected to existing congregations but their participation will not take them away from their local church. Instead, we wish to complement the ministry of their local churches by engaging in a vital mission to college-age students. If any local church has a college program already, the CMC-LA will exist to support that work and connect individuals to the rest of the communities that are part of the greater coalition. All local and contextual communities will regularly come together as one larger faith community in the county. The coalition will establish localized, scattered communities that regularly organize into unified gatherings.

In the forefront, we will be re-launching here at UCLA. This community will target both UCLA and Santa Monica Community College students, all who live and engage in the westside of Los Angeles. In partnership with Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Winnetka, CA, we will also launch a new mission to California State University in Northridge, CA. These will be our initial communities upon the launching of the CMC-LA. Praise God for the opportunities He presents!

There are many more conversations to be had regarding the development of the CMC-LA and its sustainability, but we enter them with faith and the gifts of each person God has placed in our midst. In prayerful anticipation, please look for updates and future developments! We are excited for what God has in store for His Kingdom work, and we would love for you to join us in praying for His will to be done through this initiative.

The history of ULC will unquestionably be part of the story of the CMC-LA and we want to celebrate and praise God for the ministry that has taken place through the building on Strathmore Drive. Therefore, we will have a concluding worship service and Celebration of Ministry on **Sunday, June 24<sup>th</sup>**. We would like to worship and celebrate with you, so please mark your calendars! Worship will begin at **5:30pm**, with a reception immediately following. The evening will conclude by **8:30pm**. An invitation will be sent soon over email throughout the district, so please RSVP via this medium.

It is a blessing to be partners in the Gospel and mission of Christ. Thank you for your prayer, service, and sacrifice for the sake of God's Kingdom in your corner of God's world. It is His joy to reclaim the world with the Gospel and bring us into this joyful effort.

In the Name of Jesus, who is and whose mission is the same yesterday, today, and always,

Rev. Bartholomew Loos

Pastor, University Lutheran Chapel

Mercedes Smith

President, University Lutheran Chapel