University Lutheran Church
Cambridge, Mass. 02138

May 13, 1966

Report of the Assistant Pastor

I have been asked to report specifically on our ministry at Harvard-Radcliffe. I will try to do this concretely: and that means viewing this ministry first from the perspective of my own experience this year and secondly in relation to University Lutheran Church and our whole ministry and program.

The ministry at Harvard, as I see it and have experienced it, moves from and to, to and from, our Congregation. The ministry at Harvard is not parachuted in from some high-flying denominational or supra-denominational airplane, which then flys away and leaves the ministry to fend for itself. Our ministry has an already firmly established base of operations on the terra firma of the university world.

This is salutary. People at Harvard know, or can know, where the Church is and for whom we stand - and, perhaps, where they do not want to be and for whom they do not want to stand. Likewise they know, or can know, whence the ordained minister comes and what his role is, at least in broad outline. They do not suddenly encounter a religious parachutist fallen from some unidentifiable plane.

I might speak, then, of the "ministerial field" at H-R, that is, the area over which our ministry at H-R extends. This area can be circumscribed in three concentric circles: (1) the worshiping community, (2) those with some interest in the Church, and (3) an anti-Church, a-Church group. The lines between these groups, of course, are not rigid. The a-Church student of today may be the worshiping student of tomorrow and vice versa. But these groups can be defined with relative clarity. And it is useful to keep them in mind even though, in principle, our ministry at Harvard is simultaneously directed at each of the three groups.

I. The Ministry in the Worshiping Community

The ministry at H-R begins and continues with the worshiping community. It almost goes without saying that our effectiveness at Harvard, such as it is, is dependent on the vitality of our worship. And I mean worship which is liturgical - Theologically, self-consciously, experimentally, and naturally liturgical - and which includes, at least from time to time, preaching which has a cutting edge. A student may never want to discuss the Faith with me in his House or in a coffee house or in any other public or private establishment. Nevertheless, the opportunity for conversation is always open to us when he comes Sunday morning and sees and hears me and others taking the Faith seriously. Moreover, through liturgical worship he can come to realize what he may not be able to do otherwise in this oversimplifying academic community: that the Faith is much bigger than mere ideas and mere morality, that it is a matter of life and living reality. In this connection, our concern for the physical setting for our worship, especially our chancel renovation, speaks a message at H-R which a hundred "relevant" theological pamphlets and perhaps a half-dozen "deep" study groups could not. We are exhibiting our attention to the Divine Mysteries and our concomitant realization that our Faith transcends our ideas and our behavior.

I might add that, from a H-R perspective, the diversity of our worshiping community is decisive. It is refreshing to H-R people to

see and sometimes meet students and faculty from other schools, people who live outside the halls of ivey, and people of all ages. As one student said to me, "On Sunday I don't want to see Harvard all over again." I might add, too, that the variety of worship opportunities which we offer is of some significance from a H-R perspective. A number of students, for example, have come to Matins regularly for some time; others have found the 5 PM Vespers a good initiation into a disciplined life of worship. But I sadly report here that the "Daily Prayers" which we instituted this semester following Holy Week have died a silent, lonely death. Whether there can or should be a resurrection is a question worth pondering.

For the record, about 60 of the 126 identifiable Lutheran undergraduates at Harvard have worshiped with us this year at one time or another; about 8 of the 21 Radcliffe Lutherans have done so. It is difficult to say how many non-Lutheran H-R undergraduates have worshiped with us; perhaps 35.

II. The Ministry in the University World

But the worshiping community is not everything. At the same time we have to, and we try to, take the university seriously. This means entering into university life and concerns in a variety of ways, some of which I will describe presently. Without this movement into the university, the second and third group of students mentioned above might never have the opportunity to enter into any significant conversation about and in the Faith. And, those who worship with us might conclude, implicitly if not explicitly, that worship and the university world are two separate spheres of existence.

For the sake of discussion, the extra-worship ministry at H-R can be divided into two types, direct and indirect.

A. Direct Ministry

1. Inside the Church Building

The traditional Sunday student suppers have continued. Not many H-R students attend these (5 to 10), but those in attendance value the fun and the friendship they experience there. This meal has a significant place in our ministry.

The Sunday Forums have also continued with a regular core of H-R students attending (5 to 10, not always the same people who come to supper). Several Forums, however, have drawn as many as 40 H-R students. Not to be forgotten, moreover, is the meaning the Forums have for those who do not attend, both those who worship with us and those who do not. In the Sunday Evening Forum our Church is publicly and honestly dealing with the issues of today. This is a kind of proclamation of the Gospel which we ought not to overlook. When we run an advertisement in the CRIMSON, as we have been doing regularly this year, or when we put a notice in the gulletin, announcing that we are hearing about Boston's pioneering civil rights venture "Operation Exodus," for example, we are announcing the Church's mission in the world (even though the average reader may not immediately understand it as such).

The Student Council continued to function well this year, with 6 of the 19 Councilors being H-R students, two of them sophomores, two of them seniors, the other two graduate students. The Council President, Ronald MacLennan, Harvard '66, did a good job of shepherding his sheep. Much of the responsibility for the Forums was ably borne by Edward Young, Harvard '66. We are looking forward to a good deal of creative work by next year's Council. Interestingly, 11 of the 29 newly elected

Councilors are from H-R. Here we can see that H-R students are willing to identify themselves with our sometimes maligned but nevertheless essential institutional functioning, even though, as a general rule, it is difficult for the average H-R student to find a meaningful role in this context. Four of the 11 new H-R councilors are Harvard freshmen, which is a good sign for the years immediately before us. The new president, Peter Stone, is a Harvard Graduate student, and the new treasurer, Richard Kerchner, is a Harvard sophomore.

The Social Action Commission has been the most active intra-Council group this year. Under the leadership of Scott Steketee, Harvard sophomore, a controversial and cogent newsletter, "Action," was published and distributed to all members of the Congregation. Also, an attempt was made to continue our work with Cambridge's Youth Director, Ralph Ward; but this was soon curtailed when the city manager fired Mr. Ward. Next year, again under Scott Steketee's leadership, the Social Action Commission hopes to undertake a new project, working with some of the many local teenagers who congregate in the Harvard Square area, perhaps - with careful planning - using the Uni-Lu basement as a drop-in center. If this kind of project could be carried out, we might easily double (or more) the number of H-R students who identify themselves with our institutional functioning. For what it may be worth, I received a letter from a Harvard senior recently explaining why he had not responded to a dinner invitation from me. "The Church is too theoretical for me," he wrote; "I have long ago given up attending worship because my concerns are practical."

Under the present heading I might also mention the Lenten Series which I led: Vespers with an address, the address dealing with thinkers like Kierkegaard and Nietzsche (5 sessions). A few H-R students attended this (6 to 10), most of them members of the choir and therefore a captive audience. Several H-R graduate students attended from time to time. I think we can do more of this kind of work, but how to do it I am not so sure.

Not to be forgotten in this connection is the Study Group on Harvey Cox's SECULAR CITY ably led by Danforth Intern Paul Wagner (who has been my year-long, highly valued interlocutor concerning the ministry at H-R) and Harvard Graduate student, Alan Haberman; one or two H-R students attended this. Clearly we need to re-think the whole area of study (more on this below).

Also worth mentioning under the present heading is a Cider-and-Donuts Session Paul Wagner and I had for Harvard undergraduates during the winter exam period. Seven attended, three of the seven not previously known to us. We will hold another such session (or more) during the forthcoming exam period.

Of no small significance, too, was the December Rock'n'Roll Party sponsored by the Student Council and featuring Harvard's Forerunner No less than 40 H-R students attended this, only three of them known to us previously. Although we had hoped for a turnout in the hundreds - about 90 attended - the H-R attendance is an achievement. It is an achievement because the vast majority of H-R students consider the Church to be stuffy, if not dead. So much so that they carefully avoid entering Church buildings.

And I should not fail to mention here the rehearsal-times we have made available to H-R students. Our organ, piano, and our Alumni Room are regularly in use in this connection. This will explain, for example, the cool jazz you may have heard coming from our building

a large audience (about 75) followed by a good discussion led by Alan Tobey, MIT '66.

In addition, we sponsored a series of seven Firday concerts, called "Musical Offerings." They featured professionally performed music with a Scripture lesson, a contemporary reading, and a hymn. I had good (and serious) theological fun in telling all the participants before we began - many of them having no discernable church affiliation - "now remember our ground rules: we are performing tonight first of all for the glory of God." Typical response: "I hope He doesn't know too much about organ music." Attendance varied from a low of 15 to a high of 46, many people being friends of the participants and many, I surmise, not having a church affiliation. More than half of those attending and almost all those participating came from H-R. We served coffee after each performance, with about half those in attendance remaining.

I would hope that such programs can continue. And perhaps we will also be able to revive the Arts Festival which, notwithstanding all the hard work, was a splendid achievement a couple of years ago and before.

3. Social Action

With several of our studnets at the beginning of the year I helped in the formative stages of the Harvard chapter of Americans for the Reappraisal of Far Eastern Policy (ARFEP), though, I have lost touch with this project. As some have noticed, too, from posted letters on the Social Action bulletin board, Paul Wagner and I have done some letter writing, telegraph sending, and petition signing in the area of social action (which amounts to not a great deal). Also, taking one tiny step in the path of Pastor Horn's many giant steps, I will be a member of the Advisory Board of the Cambridge Council of Youth. I mention these matters since I think they have significance beyond themselves; they show students that at least from time to time the otherwise sit-on-his-hands clergyman is able to practice what he preaches. And to this day at H-R, to introduce yet another cliche, actions speak louder than words.

4. The Chance Encounter

I frequent H-R events: sports, concerts, plays, etc. I eat in establishments around the Square fairly often, sometimes in the wee hours. I use the Harvard libraries, and, on occasion, I attend Harvard lectures, special and regular. This is chiefly for my own personal use and enjoyment; but I do meet students in such contexts, and those chance meetings are not without their significance from the perspective of ministry.

III. Some Problems Related to the Ministry at H-R

A. How can we have a more effective ministry at Radcliffe? B. What are we going to do to enliven our teaching-study program? The staff is willing, but the experience of small, small stendance over the years is inhibiting. The UM seminars may be a step in the right direction. C. What are we going to do to minister directly to Harvard grad students? D. What are we going to do to begin to minister directly to Harvard faculty? E. In a special category: H-R married grad students. F. A significant practical problem: if the ministry at H-R is to expand, perhaps it will be necessary to hire a part-time secretary (say 2 afternoons a week) to do the work specifically related to H-R and Wellesley.

Respectfully submitted, H. Paul Santmire

Edward Young and Scott Steketee, to organize trips to Wellesley to meet with the Wellesley Lutherans. Although cards were sent to all Harvard undergraduates, the Harvard contingent was never over five - somewhat to my surprise. This was not because the idea was a bad one, I think, but because of poor timing and other contingencies. In this connection I might comment that although Wellesley is in many respects a planet unto itself, in other respects it is - without embarassment - a Harvard satellite. Although 13 miles separate the two, they are unofficially, but in noticeable ways, part of the same campus. We should be confused by geography in this case. Hence I have been pleased to have been assigned pastoral duties at Wellesley as well as H-R.

For the record, of the 126 identifiable Lutheran undergraduates at Harvard, I either have had lunch or lengthy conversations with 67 at least once this year. A number, 23, did not respond to lunch invitations. Taken together, 90, that means that I have not contacted 36 students as of this date - I now note with some surprise. I have had lunch with 9 non-Lutheran Harvard students whom I met in various contexts. I have visited Radcliffe for dinner twice this year, which means, given the system, I have at least been introduced to a couple of tables of non-Lutheran students at Radcliffe.

B. Indirect Ministry

1. The United Ministry at H-R

From the outset of this academic year I have been a member of the quasi-ecumenical United Ministry; and have been elected treasurer for next year. I am presently serving as advisor for a group of UM students who are planning joint Forums for next year; Dotti Oeste, R'68, is our representative. Also I am a member of the UM committee planning college-wide seminars for next year. I will personally participate in two, one with the Episcopal and Methodist pastors on "What Can a Christian Believe?", the other with the Methodist pastor on "The Thought of Paul Tillich."

2. The Arts

Undoubtedly the language which the H-R world understands best is the language of the arts. The number of artistic events in the Harvard domain is astounding. Virtually every House has its music society, many have their own art festivals, many have one or more of their own literary publications. Add to this the Harvard-wide programs: the Loeb, the H-R Orchestra, the Glee Club and Choral Society (the latter we hosted this year for, alas, a poorly attended concert), the Band, the Harvard Advocate, the Harvard Review, visiting groups like the Capella Cordina from Yale (which we hosted to an overflow audience for the Lowell House musical society), and a vast variety of other enterprises, as the Bach Society Orchestra, the Byzantine Choir, the Forerunners, the Jazz Dance Quintet, the Gilbert and Sullivan Players, etc., etc. - and one loses one's breath!

We should not want to compete in this area, of course. But, I am convinced, we should want to speak our own peculiar message in this area in the best way possible.

We have made some halting steps in this direction this year. The Student Council has sponsored three play readings. During Lent we gathered a small but fine exhibit of the works of Kaethe Killwitz (some of which are still in our Alumni Room as of this time). Also the Student Council sponsored the showing of Bergman's Seventh Seal to

example, the cool jazz you may have heard coming from our building regularly this semester. Again, I hope we do not underestimate the importance of this simple service which we perform: we are identifying ourselves with concerns which are of considerable importance to students - participating in the daily student world as it were, and showing, perhaps, that the Church can be joyfully jazzy as well as, at time, lukewarmedly liturgical.

In this connection the use of our Alumni Room for student study-relaxation-meeting hours can be mentioned. We ought to be in a position to offer this service judiciously to all students who would like to use the room. Not much was done in this direction, however, given the shabby and harsh condition of the Alumni Room. If the Alumni Room were to be redone so that it could lend a humanizing aspect, I think our ministry could be extended in a significant way. Sometimes a student likes to have a place "just to go," when library and room and common room leave him or her cold.

I have done a limited amount of counseling with H-R students in my office this year.

2. Outside the Church Building

At the beginning of the academic year Paul Wagner and I called on 10 of the 30 Harvard freshmen whose preference cards we had received. And that was about the extent of our calling, as such, at H-R this year. Calling as such is a very precarious business at Harvard! Our most faithful students look the other way when the subject is mentioned. Nevertheless, in my judgment we should make the effort next year to see all freshment early in the year, hopefully by having upperclassmen call to invite them to our opening Forum and to ask them if they need any help with their schedules.

At the beginning of the year I invited most of the Harvard freshmen to Sherry (in good Harvard tradition) at my home on two occasions. Fifteen of the 24 invited attended. This was a much more natural way of getting to know them than calling! (I think they enjoyed themselves, too!) Next fall, in addition to what was done this year, I hope to have a catered dinner for H-R freshmen.

Throughout this year I have been having lunch with Harvard undergraduates, often five times a week. This has been a most worthwhile effort. Here I have met many students who do not worship with us but who have some interest in the Faith. I also have had opportunity to meet some a-Church and the anti-Church students insofar as I was introduced to some roommates at these lunches.

On two occasions I have arranged group dinners in the Harvard Houses. The first of the two, at Lowell House, was surprisingly successful. Twenty students attended of the 28 invited; only three of the 20 having worshiped with us previous to that time. Prof. Stendahl was our guest in the small dining room; and a bottle or two of wine made the dining-hall food a little more palatable. I sent letters to all Lowell men on our mailing list, inviting them to the dinner. Then I went around and called on them to see if they could come, and in the course met many I had never seen before. We did the same at Leverett House with Mr. Hans Anderson, Harvard Junior Fellow, and member of our Congregation, as our guest. The numbers were not so great, 6 of 19 attended, but it was a fine evening, and, again, in the course of calling I had a number of lengthy conversations with those invited, almost all of them being in the a-Church, anti-Church group.

Also I have helped to encourage two Harvard undergraduates,