

COMMON GROUND

Newsletter of United Campus Ministry

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FROM THE OFFICE:

Being an Actor Instead of a Reactor

I walked with my friend, a Quaker, to the newsstand the other night, and he bought a paper, thanking the newsman politely. The newsman didn't even acknowledge it.

"A sullen fellow, isn't he?" I commented. "Oh, he's that way every night," shrugged my friend. "Then why do you continue being so polite to him?" I asked. "Why not?" inquired my friend. "Why should I let *him* decide how I'm going to act?"

As I thought about this little incident later, it occurred to me that the operating word was "act." My friend "*acts*" toward people; most of us react toward them.

He has a sense of inner balance lacking in most of us frail and uncertain creatures; he knows who he is, what he stands for, and how he should behave.

No boor is going to disturb the equilibrium of his nature, he simply refuses to return incivility with incivility, because he would no longer be in command of his own conduct, but a mere responder to others.

When we are enjoined in the Bible to return good for evil, we look upon this as a moral injunction, which it is, but it is also a psychological prescription for our emotional health.

Nobody is unhappier than the perpetual reactor. His center of emotional gravity is not rooted within himself, where it belongs, but in the world outside him. His spiritual temperature is always being raised or lowered by the social climate around him, and he is a mere creature at the mercy of these elements.

Praise gives him a feeling of euphoria, which is false, because it does not last and it does not come from self approval. Criticism depresses him more than it should, because it confirms his own secretly shaky opinion of himself. Snubs hurt him, and the merest suspicion of unpopularity in any quarter rouses him to bitterness, aggressiveness, or complaint.

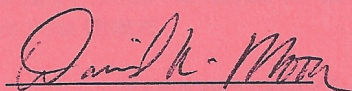
Only a saint, of course, *never* reacts. But a serenity of spirit can not be achieved until we become the masters of our own actions and attitudes, and not merely the passive reactors to other persons' feelings. To let another determine whether we shall be rude or gracious, elated or depressed is to relinquish control over our own personalities which is ultimately all we possess. The only true possession is self-possession.

My friend is a model of balanced conduct, and few of us can hope to attain his kind of surefootedness. But we can at least adjust our weight to lean less heavily upon the world's giddy gyrations.

-Sidney Harris, syndicated column, *Detroit Free Press*

This month, as the newness of the semester wears off and the daily grind begins, we challenge you to be "actors instead of reactors." It is likely that every day you may face situations that test your faith. So remember, drop by the office if you need anything, and/or call your UCM friends; we are here to support and direct each other. "...The eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love."

-Psalm 33:18


David Moore, Director


Amy Kulp, Asst. Director



WEEKLY EVENTS

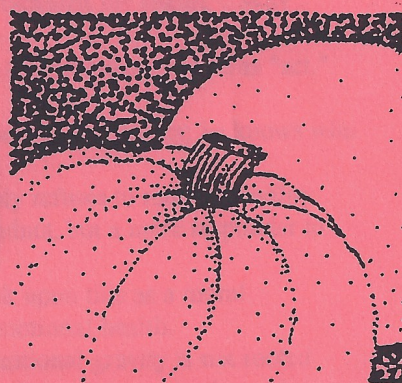
***MONDAY:** "RA-MON-DAY"-Have a free ramen lunch with friends at the UCM Office!
Drop in anytime between 12 P.M.-1:30 P.M.
MUSIC-Practice and jam session, UCM Office @ 4:00 P.M.

***TUESDAY:** VESPERS-Casual worship service, Lola Tilly Commons Lounge @ 7:30 P.M.

***THURSDAY:** LUNCH BUNCH-Bible study and snack time, 307 Gruening @ 1 P.M. This semester we are discussing John.

***SUNDAY:** LEADERSHIP-Open to anyone interested in planning UCM activities.
307 Gruening @ 8:00 P.M. Come and share! We are also studying the minor prophets.

Fall



SPECIAL UPCOMING EVENTS:

4th Annual Fall Fund-Raiser Dinner! Come join us for a fun evening with friends and our community supporters. Meet at the UCM office, 306 Constitution Hall, at 5:30 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 2nd. We will caravan to Wickersham Banquet Hall for a catered dinner, slide show, and singing. This is a great evening for dressing up! No jeans or T-shirts, please. Cost: Free.

Fall Retreat will be October 9-10th. Note: This is a date change from the last newsletter. We will meet at the office on Friday, Oct. 9th at 5:30 p.m. and head out to Chena Hot Springs! During the evening we will have a time for worship and time to soak in the hot tubs. We will return to campus late Saturday afternoon. Cost: \$25.00. If you have trouble coming up with the money, please talk to David or Amy K. We want to have you with us and will help you in any way that we can!

Come join us Sing at St. Paul's United Methodist on Sunday, Oct. 18th. Meet at the UCM office at 9:30 a.m. and we will practice a few of our favorite songs to share. The more voices we have the more fun it will be! After the service we will stay at the church for a free barbecue.

All Campus-Ministry Gym Night will be Friday, Oct. 30th. Meet at the Student Recreation Center at 7 p.m. Bring a pair of extra sneakers, your student ID card, and a friend from another campus ministry. We will play the night away: soccer, volleyball, basketball, etc. If you wish to become certified to use the climbing wall, bring \$5.00 for the certification class. Hope to see you there!

Quote of the Week:

*"Do not view Christ through your circumstances.
Instead, view your circumstances through Christ."*

