

OCCASIONAL CAMPUS COMMUNIQUE

September 5, 2012

The President's Perspective – A Brief Essay

At North Park certain words take on special meaning. These are words which carry an important role in our institutional DNA. We can't be a North Parker without knowing them and without making them part of our vocabulary.

What are these words? Well, there's no official list but here are a few you'll recognize immediately.

- Significance
- Service
- Christian
- Urban
- Multicultural

And there are others:

- Covenant
- Dialogue
- Axelson
- Sweden
- Threshold
- Foster
- Collegelife
- Fika
- Pit
- Viking
- Gathering Day (OK, that's two words).

At the beginning of this new academic year I'm introducing a new word to our community vocabulary at North Park. I expect this word will soon roll off every tongue as easily and as quickly as the words just mentioned.

From today on you can't be a North Parker without knowing this word and using it frequently.

Here it is, so read (and speak) carefully.

Quasquicentennial! Let's try that again: Quasquicentennial!

That's right. In 2016, just four years from now, we're going to celebrate North Park's 125th birthday. It will be a grand year because we'll have much to celebrate.

In 2016, during our quasiquicentennial celebration, we'll reflect on and give thanks for the past, recognizing the dedicated work of many who have come before us. We'll celebrate the present, noting the blessings of God's faithfulness in each day. And we'll envision the future, perhaps not for the next 125 years collectively, but at least for a few years over the more immediate horizon.

We'll begin planning for our celebration this year and we'll ramp up the planning as 2016 approaches. Our first task, however, is to learn the newest word introduced into North Park's defining vocabulary. So practice it until it rolls off your tongue with ease.

Quasiquicentennial!

Some of us will get this word right the very first time we read it. But if you're like me, it will take a few repetitions before you're comfortable saying it. If you want some help in pronouncing this word try this:

kwah – skwee – centennial

You're still curious, perhaps, so here's a little more interesting reading on the topic.

It isn't unusual in English to use Latin-derived numerical names. But how did this particular word originate, and what does it actually mean?

I did some "research" (everything I know on this topic comes from Wikipedia) and discovered that the word was first proposed by Robert L. Chapman in 1961 who at the time was editor of Funk and Wagnalls. He tells the story in an article on "The History of 'Quasiquicentennial'" published in *American Speech* in 1965. The word was proposed in response to an inquiry from a Mr. Hatten, and here is the story as told by Mr. Chapman:

Dr. Wilfred Funk has passed your letter of July 1 on to us. We are happy to help, if you feel that you really want a new Latinate word meaning "one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary." The best model upon which to form the word is "sesquicentennial," meaning "one hundred and fiftieth anniversary." We need a first element meaning "plus a fourth," analogous with "sesqui" which means "plus a half." "Sesqui" is apparently formed from "semis que," meaning "and a half." Now, both "quarta" and "quadrans" mean "a fourth," so we may begin with either "quarta que" or "quadrans que." The trick is to combine and shorten one of these as "sesqui" was combined and shortened from "semis que." If we follow the model of "sesqui" very closely, retaining the stressed vowel and final "s" of "quadrans," we get the word "Quasiquicentennial." Combining and shortening in other ways we can also get "quadqui-," "quansqui-," "quarsqui-," and perhaps several others. On the grounds that it is closest to the model and also probably the least ugly of the set, I would choose "quasiquicentennial" as the new word. Of course, you may decide that you

do not really want or need a new word. There is no point in proliferating them needlessly. I should add, perhaps, that this word would not appear in any of our dictionaries until it had established itself in wide currency, even if you should decide to use it. I hope we have been able to help you.

So there we have it. How are words formed? Well, you create a number of alternatives and then pick the “least ugly” option!

And has the word stuck? I’m not certain. Wikipedia makes it official, but this word hasn’t yet been included in the Oxford Dictionary of the English Language. I’m thinking that once we embrace the word at North Park, and thereby give it “wide currency” over the next few years, then “the dictionary” will get its arms around this word as well!

Nonetheless, we’ll use it, and for the next few years “quasiquicentennial” will be one of the words that identifies the DNA of North Park. Get ready to celebrate!

Celebrations

And, speaking of celebrations, we have two planned for consecutive days in mid-September. Please note both of these and join your colleagues and our students in these noteworthy campus celebrations.

On Sunday, September 16, at 4:00 p.m., we’ll host the Fall Convocation for the Seminary. The program this year has a dual purpose. As is our custom, the convocation serves as an occasion to welcome new students and greet returning seminarians. This will be an important part of this year’s program. But another component of the convocation this year will be the installation of David Kersten as the new Dean of the Seminary. The convocation will be held in Anderson Chapel; a reception will follow the program in Hamming Hall.

The very next day, on Monday, September 17, at 10:30 a.m. in Anderson Chapel, we will gather for North Park’s annual University Convocation to recognize the significant accomplishments of some of our colleagues. The groups recognized include recently promoted and/or tenured faculty members, individuals who have had a book published during the past year, and those assuming new administrative appointments. The list below names those whose accomplishments will be recognized in this year’s program. Please join our colleagues on this day to celebrate with them.

Recently Promoted and/or Tenured Faculty

Ida Maduram – promoted to professor
Paul Priester – promoted to professor
Soong-Chan Rah – appointed with tenure

Joel Willitts – appointed with tenure

Recently Published Book Authors

Philip J. Anderson and Dag Blanck, editors
Norwegians and Swedes in the United States (Minnesota Historical Society Press)

Philip J. Anderson, editor
The Augustana Synod and the Covenant Church: Contact, Conflict, and Confluence 1860 – 2010 (Swedish-American Historical Society)

Gregory S. Athnos
The Easter Jesus and the Good Friday Church (Outskirts Press, Inc.)

Gregory S. Athnos
The Art of the Roman Catacombs (Outskirts Press, Inc.)

James K. Bruckner
Healthy Human Life: A Biblical Perspective (Cascade Books)

Stephen Chester, Grant Osborne, Mark Seifrid and Chad Brand
Perspectives on our Struggle with Sin: Three Views of Romans 7 (Broadman & Holman)

Julia Davids and Stephen LaTour
Vocal Technique: A Guide for Conductors, Teachers, and Singers (Waveland Press, Inc.)

Paul De Neui, editor
Complexities of Money and Missions in Asia (William Carey Library)

Barbara Levandowski
The Adventures of Muffin and Alexander: Off to School (Trafford Publishing)

Bradley Nassif
Bringing Jesus to the Desert (Zondervan)

Brock Bingaman and Bradley Nassif, editors
The Philokalia: A Classic Text of Orthodox Spirituality (Oxford University Press)

Kristy Odelius and Timothy Yu
Kiss the Stranger (Corollary Press)

M. Sydney Park, Soong-Chan Rah, and Al Tizon, editors

Honoring the Generations: Learning with Asian North American Congregations
(Judson Press Publishers)

Richard A. BurrIDGE and Joel Willitts, authors; Daniel M. Gurtner, editor
Jesus, Matthew's Gospel and Early Christianity: Studies in Memory of Graham N. Stanton (Library of New Testament Studies)

Theodore G. Zervas
The Making of a Modern Greek Identity: Education, Nationalism, and the Teaching of A Greek National Past (Columbia University Press)

Recently Appointed Administrators

Jennifer Dixon

Director of Undergraduate Recruitment & Enrollment

Daniel Hodge

Director of the Center for Youth Ministries and Assistant Professor of Youth Ministries

Enrollment Information Sessions

As we have previously announced, members of North Park's faculty and staff are encouraged this coming week to attend a session at which we will present to the campus community, and discuss with you, information regarding recent declines in undergraduate and graduate enrollment, and the implications for our budget this year.

These will be information-packed sessions. We'll provide a good amount of data, we'll analyze these data and talk about changes in student interests and the college decision-making processes, we'll outline steps we're putting in place for recruiting during the coming year, and we'll ask for your insights. Additionally, we'll point specifically to ways each of us can be involved both in recruiting students and in assuring strong persistence of enrolled students. And we'll discuss the implications for this year's budget.

Please join your colleagues at one of the following sessions:

For faculty:

Monday, September 10
3:30 to 5:00 p.m.
Hamming Hall

For staff:

Thursday, September 13
8:30 to 10:00 a.m.
Magnusson Alumni/River Room

I look forward to seeing you at one of these sessions, and to the opportunity to talk with you about the year ahead.