



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER TO PRESIDENT'S CLUB AND HERITAGE CIRCLE DONORS
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"This is a special season at North Park. The end of the semester approaches, final exams await, yet Advent is here."

A FESTIVAL CELEBRATION

Tradition has it that in 1880 Edward White Benson, an English pastor, gathered his congregation in a small wooden shed used occasionally as their parish church for a special service on Christmas Eve. In this service Pastor Benson combined readings from scripture and the singing of Advent hymns and Christmas carols to tell the story of Jesus—the fall of humanity, the promise of a Messiah, the birth of Jesus, and the visit of the magi.

It doesn't take much to imagine what this service must have been like—a small group of English Christians, shivering in the winter night, perhaps gathered round a bucket of coals to keep the least bit warm. Scripture passages were read with some hesitation, stumbling over words of ancient text. Carols were sung both on-tune and off, in harmony and with dissonance. Yet it was Christmas Eve, so all was well in 1880.

Over the following decades this humble tradition has become known around the world. Adopted by the English church the Festival Service of Lessons and Carols is broadcast each year on Christmas Eve from King's College, Cambridge featuring carols sung by the famous Choir of King's College.

It also is a tradition adopted by North Park University. Singing in harmony and always on tune, the students of North Park celebrate the beginning of the Advent season with a Festival Service of Nine Lessons and Carols. The setting is not a wooden shed but rather the sanctuary of Our Lady of Mercy Church, just south from the University on Kedzie Avenue in the Albany Park neighborhood. The carols are both familiar and new; English, Swedish, and from around the world. The scripture passages tell the celebrated story from Genesis through Revelation. The audience includes students, their parents, donor friends of North Park, parishioners from Our Lady of Mercy Church, and others from our Chicago neighborhood.

This is a special season at North Park. The end of the semester approaches, final exams await, yet Advent is here. Even as Mary and Joseph found their way to Bethlehem, we make our way to Albany Park. As the star shone brightly over the manger, so the twinkle of a million lights makes this city a grand and sacred place to celebrate the birth of the Christ-child. As the Word was made flesh in Christ that first Christmas night, so may this same Word be made flesh in us, revealing the glory of the Lord, preparing the way, and making straight the path.



NEW TRUSTEES

I'm fortunate to partner in the leadership of North Park University with very capable and dedicated people. Numbered among these are members of the Board of Trustees. These individuals serve for five-year terms, which means each year we introduce a small group of new members. As the Board gathered in October we welcome our new class of trustees:

- Renee E. J. Borkowski, C '90 – Regional Vice President, Marketing Strategy, with Razorfish in Chicago, Illinois
- Randall Y. Furushima – Academic Vice President at Pacific Rim Christian College in Honolulu, Hawaii
- Donna M. Harris – President of Minnehaha Academy in Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Paul A. Hawkinson, C '92 – Managing Director, U.S. Sector Head—Industrial Investment Banking with BMO Capital Markets in Chicago, Illinois
- Peter Hong – lead pastor of New Community Covenant Church in Chicago, Illinois

VIKING CHAMPIONS

This fall semester became a special season to the Viking Men's Soccer Team. Following a very competitive regular season the Viking team entered the CCIW post-season championship tournament where they achieved first-place honors.

The conference championship required a win against Carthage College with North Park posting a 2-0 victory on our home field, and then a win against host Wheaton College with North Park coming through in overtime with a 3-2 score.

The conference tournament championship earned the Vikings the opportunity to represent the CCIW in the NCAA Division III National Tournament. Our team was successful in the first round defeating Hope College, and bowed out of the tournament with a 2-0 loss to University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh. The Vikings finished the season with a 13-5-2 record and earned their first-ever win in the NCAA National Tournament. Additionally, six players from the team earned First-Team All-CCIW honors for the 2010 season, the most ever first-team selections in the history of Vikings men's soccer.



CALLED TO BE CO-CREATORS

Among academics, one of the more puzzling parts of the Bible is a verse near the end of Ecclesiastes: "Of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh"! These words notwithstanding, at the beginning of each academic year we gather as a university community to recognize the achievements of faculty who have authored and published books during the recent year.

As part of the litany prepared for this day we commended our faculty authors in this manner:

Words are precious and valued, holy and sacred. To write is to contribute to the divine creation, to be a writer is to be called by God's hand to be co-creator. God has placed both a challenge and a gift before you; and you have taken up the challenge and claimed the gift.

Introduced at this year's convocation were the following individuals, and their respective book:

- Mae Elise Cannon, *Social Justice Handbook: Small Steps for a Better World* (InterVarsity Press)
- Michelle Clifton-Soderstrom, *Angels, Worms, and Bogeys:*



Viking men's soccer team

The Christian Ethic of Pietism (Wipf and Stock Publishers)

- Paul DeNeui, editor, *Family and Faith in Asia: The Missional Impact of Social Networks* (William Carey Library)
- John R. Hjelm, *The Dimensions of Health: Conceptual Models* (Jones and Bartlett Publishers)
- Scot McKnight, *One Life: Jesus Calls, We Follow* (Zondervan Publishers)
- Scot McKnight, et.al., *Church in the Present Tense* (Baker Academic)
- Soong-Chan Rah, *Many Colors: Cultural Intelligence for a Changing Church* (Moody Press)
- Rupert Simms, *A Gramscian Analysis of the Role of Religion in Politics: Case Studies in Domination, Accommodation, and Resistance* (Edwin Mellon Press)
- Michel F. Bird and Joel Willitts, editors, *Paul and the Gospels: Conflicts and Convergences* (T&T Clark)

We give thanks to God for filling the imaginations of these members of our faculty, and for their dedication to the service of writing.

EXPERTISE AND PASSION

At this same convocation we celebrated the expertise and skills, the passion and commitment of three faculty members who were installed to endowed faculty chairs.

- Linda R. Duncan as Gretchen Carlson Professor of Nursing
- Ilsup Ahn as Carl I. Lindberg Associate Professor of Philosophy
- Julia Lynn Davids as Stephen J. Hendrickson Assistant Professor of Music

These three are special members of our faculty community. By appointing them to their respective endowed chair, the University affirms our need for the health-filled life they inspire, the reflective thought they encourage, and the beauty of musical note they create. Their presence at North Park University makes our campus a more excellent community of learners, and their walk among us enriches our individual lives.

Endowed chairs are made possible through the generosity of friends of North Park. For this reason we were very pleased at this convocation to welcome and recognize the individuals and families who provided the financial support for these chairs. These include:

- Rollie Carlson and his daughters for the Gretchen Carlson Endowed Chair in Nursing
- Marge and Don Sveen for the Carl I. Lindberg Endowed Chair in Applied Ethics
- Steve Hendrickson for the Stephen J. Hendrickson Chair in Music

These gifts, and others like them, offer what I like to refer to as “our margin of excellence.” These gifts help make North Park University a special place of learning.



ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP

I'm pleased to introduce Mr. Nathan Mouttet, recently appointed as Vice President for Enrollment and Marketing. Nate served most recently as Vice President and Senior Consultant with the Austen Group, a higher education consulting agency. Previously he was with the Council of Christian Colleges and Universities serving as Vice President for Communications. He began his career at John Brown University where he provided leadership in undergraduate admissions. He is a graduate of both John Brown and Asbury Theological Seminary.

Nate joined North Park's senior leadership team on December 1. His wife, Kristi, and their young son, Samuel, will move to Chicago from Washington, DC in February, when we'll welcome them with the finest of Chicago winters!

CLOSING THOUGHT

Throughout this semester I have periodically reflected on words taken from a general thanksgiving written centuries ago by a now anonymous Christian liturgist. In the middle of this prayer of thanksgiving are these words:

We thank you for setting us to tasks which demand our best efforts and for leading us to accomplishments which satisfy and delight us.

These words ring true for me when I think of my place at North Park; I pray they ring true for you as well. God calls us to this time and place, sets before us important tasks and invites us to bring to them our best efforts, and promises accomplishments which will satisfy and delight our souls.

Each day as I walk to our campus I know you walk with me. When I depart in the evening I know you have been present with me through every moment of the day—in each conversation, each decision, each moment of joy, each pause for reflection on God's faithfulness.

The road is long, yet I rejoice we travel together. May God bless each of us—in our respective places both on- and off-campus, in our individual vocations, and in our collective life within this community. Thank you for your dedication to the students of North Park University.

Blessings to each of you,

David L. Parkyn
President