

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Paying Forward and Giving Back

BY NATHAN

Last semester, our office utilized the Lynchburg Cares Fund to help cover the cost of a flight in order for a student to attend the funeral of their brother who had tragically died. After booking the flight, the student stayed in our office for a while and shared with me the depth of grief. As the conversation continued, they also shared the complete shock that the university would be willing to help in such a trying time. The student said to me, "I can't believe a community would care so much about me to do this. I cannot wait to tell everyone back home about this university and what it has done for me."

Just last week, I saw this student again in our office. It was great to catch up and hear about their summer, share some stories, and learn if the funeral was a healing process in their grief. The student went on to tell me that after telling his family all that the university had done, they decided they needed to give back to the school. The student decided one simple way to do that was to become a Community Assistant. They hope to help other students along their journey in a similar way that the campus community has helped them.

This got me reflecting on the reciprocal nature of giving back and paying forward. There are times when we help someone in need, and such an action can be a catalyst for that individual to help others. That person's way of giving back might become paying it forward.

One of the joys of working in higher education is the ongoing opportunity to help students flourish. No matter our role on this campus, we each play a part in that process. It could be as simple as remembering a student's name, saying hello, or asking how someone is doing and ensuring they know you're actually listening.

To be honest, we may not always hear how our actions have impacted someone. Yet, I trust that such actions just might allow someone else to give back and pay forward.

I hope today you find moments to help others. I hope you find moments to remember when others have helped you. And, I hope you find moments where you can pay it forward by giving back.



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Sympathies, Concerns, and Congrats

Congratulations to:

- **Savannah Bower '20** M.Ed. (Theatre) and her husband Matthew Bower on the birth of their son. Rowan James Bower was born on June 30, 2023. He weighed 6 lbs, 14 oz. and is already much-loved by his big brother Gavin and his family.



- **Lauren Ferry Merck '18** M.B.A. (Business Office) and her husband Gordon Merck '13, '15 M.Ed., on the birth of their son. Aiden James Merck was born on August 22, 2023. He weighed 9 lbs, 3 oz., and was 21.5 inches long. He joins big brother "G."



- **Chelsea Tinklenberg '20** M.Ed. (Art) and her husband Kenny on the birth of their son. Leo Rowan Tinklenberg was born on June 30, 2023. He weighed 6 lbs., 8 oz. and was 21.5 inches. They are home, happy, and healthy, and big brother Mason is super excited!



Upcoming Interfaith Holidays

Wednesday, August 30
Raksha Bandan (Hinduism)

Dates to Remember

Thursday, August 31, 3-5 p.m. p.m.
INVOLVEMENT FAIR
Hall Campus Center, Memorial Ballroom

Sympathies, Concerns, and Congrats (cont'd)

Our sympathies are extended to:

- The family, friends, and former colleagues of **Dr. Anne Bishop** (professor emeritus of nursing) who died on August 18, 2023.
- The family, friends, and former student colleagues of **Rionn Dumarr Pradia '15**, who died on August 1, 2023.
- **Sarah Rhodes** (Advancement) on the death of her grand aunt.
- **Erin Smith** (junior, Asheboro, NC) whose grandfather died.
(Links to obituaries for all in email)

For more information about the Spiritual Life Center, including info on student spiritual life student groups, go to our webpage - link in the email signature. You can also visit our Linkt.ree (Link is in email).