To the Campus Community,

As we begin a new school year I'm hoping to embrace the responsible approach to the challenges that await me. If I feel myself frustrated or overwhelmed, disappointed or critical, I'm going to take a deep breath and ask myself two questions:

1. What contribution have I possibly done myself to contribute to the problem at hand?
2. What can I do now to improve the situation for the better?

I recognize that there are real and legitimate times when all of us have truly been victimized and treated unfairly. In these situations I do believe we have both a right and a responsibility to name injustice and oppression and to seek a just solution. However, victimhood can also be a knee-jerk reaction to an unfortunate situation that keeps us from learning valuable lessons and moving forward.

Victimhood and one of Responsibility. I have been challenged by his presentation to embrace the reality that victimhood is often self-induced. What is the issue at hand? How often when something goes wrong, when the best laid plans are thwarted, when things don't pan out as planned for, or results are disappointing at best, do I look outside myself for the cause of the problem and play the victim card? How much easier is it for me to blame someone else rather than to look inside and ask myself how I might have contributed to the issue at hand?

I've heard it said that whenever you point a finger at someone there are at least three fingers pointing back to you. The Christian scriptures offer similar wisdom as Jesus challenges us to recognize the log in our own eye rather than focusing on the speck in the eye of our brother or sister.

May we welcome this new academic year with a spirit of positive engagement and an attitude of gratitude. Let's Do This!!

Victimhood or Responsibility?

By Anne Gibbons

Associate Chaplain and Director of the Bonner Leader Program

Linda Clair, Spiritual Teacher, will speak in Lynchburg. Info in Linda available on her website.

- Thur., August 28
- 6:30 p.m.
- Lodge of the Fishermen, 4415 Boonsboro Road

Volunteer Chappell, Peace Leader, is returning to Lynchburg. A West Point graduate who served in the Iraq War, Paul spoke at LC's Snidow Lecture in 2011. He is the Peace Leadership Director for the Vietnam War Peace Foundation.

- Thur., September 18
- 7 p.m.
- First Unitarian Church, 818 Court St.

Sponsored by The Peace Practice
3200 Memorial Avenue
www.thepacepractice.com

Welcome to the Chaplain's Corner newsletter. If you have a joy or concern you'd like to share with our staff, send an e-mail or give us a call at Ext. 8348. We only share concerns with the campus community, via newsletter or e-mail, with permission. You can view previous and current issues of our newsletter (in PDF format), on the Spiritual Life page of the Lynchburg College website—www.lynchburg.edu/spirituallife.

Volume 9, No. 3
August 20, 2014

Congratulations! Abby Pyzik (junior, Waynesboro, VA) on her August 9th marriage to Steven Perrow (student) whose father died. Congratulations! Chris Milson (junior, student) whose father died.

Spirituality Fair and Campus-Wide Cookout
Tuesday, August 26 4-6 p.m.
Do you Pray Well with Others?
- Come get the t-shirt!
- Come find out all the relevant ways the Center for Spiritual Life can help you stay centered and find meaning.
- Some events start earlier; look for the signs!

Linda Clair, Spiritual Teacher, will speak in Lynchburg. Info in Linda available on her website.

- Thur., August 28
- 6:30 p.m.
- Lodge of the Fishermen, 4415 Boonsboro Road

Volunteer Chappell, Peace Leader, is returning to Lynchburg. A West Point graduate who served in the Iraq War, Paul spoke at LC’s Snidow Lecture in 2011. He is the Peace Leadership Director for the Vietnam War Peace Foundation.

- Thur., September 18
- 7 p.m.
- First Unitarian Church, 818 Court St.

Sponsored by The Peace Practice
3200 Memorial Avenue
www.thepacepractice.com

Welcome to the Chaplain’s Corner newsletter. If you have a joy or concern you’d like to share with our staff, send an e-mail or give us a call at Ext. 8348. We only share concerns with the campus community, via newsletter or e-mail, with permission. You can view previous and current issues of our newsletter (in PDF format), on the Spiritual Life page of the Lynchburg College website—www.lynchburg.edu/spirituallife.

Victimhood or Responsibility?

This past week I had the privilege of participating in the 5th Annual John G. Eccles Leadership Summit. Almost 200 student leaders came together from a variety of clubs and organizations to learn about topics such as public speaking, planning events, social media, and diversity. One of our keynote speakers was Dr. John Walker from our Educational Leadership program. Dr. Walker described two kinds of leadership languages — one of Victimhood and one of Responsibility. I have been challenged by his presentation ever since as I examine my own way of being in the world.

How often when something goes wrong, when the best laid plans are thwarted, when things don’t pan out as planned for, or results are disappointing at best, do I look outside myself for the cause of the problem and play the victim card? How much easier is it for me to blame someone else rather than to look inside and ask myself how I might have contributed to the issue at hand?

I’ve heard it said that whenever you point a finger at someone there are three fingers pointing back to you. The Christian scriptures offer similar wisdom as Jesus challenges us to recognize the log in our own eye rather than focusing on the speck in the eye of our brother or sister.

As we begin a new school year I’m hoping to embrace the responsible approach to the challenges that await me. If I feel myself frustrated or overwhelmed, disappointed or critical, I’m going to take a deep breath and ask myself two questions:

1. What have I possibly done myself to contribute to the problem at hand?
2. What can I do now to improve the situation for the better?

I recognize that there are real and legitimate times when all of us have truly been victimized and treated unfairly. In these situations I do believe we have both a right and a responsibility to name injustice and oppression and to seek a just solution. However, victimhood can also be a knee-jerk reaction to an unfortunate situation that keeps us from learning valuable lessons and moving forward.

Hopefully all of us who were fortunate to enough to hear Dr. Walker and the many other positive presentations at the Leadership Summit last week will be role models of responsibility rather than victims and blamers.

May we welcome this new academic year with a spirit of positive engagement and an attitude of gratitude. Let’s Do This!!