### The Gift of Higher Education

I have worked in Higher Education for over 30 years and today I felt a double blow as a professional whose lifework has been devoted to college and university communities. The first blow came when President Garren announced the abrupt closing of Sweet Briar College, an all-women's institution founded in 1901 and nestled in the mountains less than 30 minutes from our own campus. The reasons for the closing were primarily financial according to all reports. "Few students are choosing to attend rural schools where options for internships and work experiences are limited, and even fewer want to attend a women's college" reported President J. F. Jones, Jr. I have friends who work at Sweet Briar and have met incredible young women who study there. I can't imagine the grief and shock that currently rock that closely knit community of students and their devoted faculty and staff.

Later in the day I heard an interview on NPR of Kevin Carey who directs the Education Policy Program at the New America Foundation. In his book, The End of College: Creating the Future of Learning and the University of Everywhere, Carey envisions a future in which “the idea of admission to college will become an anachronism, because the University of Everywhere will be open to everyone” and “educational resources that have been scarce and expensive for centuries will be abundant and free.” Carey argues that a private liberal-arts education such as we enjoy at Lynchburg College is no longer financially viable or realistic.

I understand and appreciate that a growing number of potential students and their parents are primarily interested in a college degree as a means to simply get a good job. However, I still hold out hope that future generations of students and their families will continue to see the value of the educational experience that communities such as Lynchburg College can provide. In addition to preparing students for future employment, institutions such as ours create lifelong learners with a curiosity and wonder about the world beyond the classroom. Within the classroom, engaging and challenging discussions, small group activities, and opportunities for oral presentations create an energy and wealth of wisdom that simply cannot be replicated online. In musical halls, on theater stages, and in studios of the arts, the creative spirit is allowed to flourish and thrive. The campus is no longer financially viable or realistic.

Outside the classroom students learn what it means to live together with civility and charity alongside those who may be very different than themselves. In the residence halls students learn conflict resolution and communication skills. On athletic fields and tracks, gyms and courts, sportsmanship and teamwork abound. In coffee houses and dining halls, fitness centers and trails by Beaver Point, on the porch of Hopwood and in red chairs on the dell, lifelong friendships are formed and nurtured, creating bonds that neither time nor distance can ever erase. Special relationships that cross the boundaries of students, faculty, staff, and administration form the heart and soul of the Lynchburg College experience, and we are indeed blessed and graced to call this campus our home. May we never take for granted the gift that we enjoy in being a part of the Hornet Hive, and may we do our best to continue the LC legacy for many years to come.

By Anne Gibbons
Associate Chaplain and Director of the Bonner Leader Program

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### Regularly Scheduled Meetings

For a list of our regularly scheduled meetings during the academic year, go to the Spiritual Life webpage and click on "Spiritual Organizations on Campus."

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### Dates to Remember

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<tr>
<th>Date/Time/Location</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, March 23</td>
<td>Jennie Cutler Shumate Lecture on Christian Ministry</td>
<td>Dr. Rita Nakashima Brock will speak on “The Role of Religion in Understanding Recovery from Moral Injury after War and Police Violence”</td>
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### Lenten Devotions

To subscribe to daily e-mail meditations, simply send a message to rapp@lynchburg.edu saying “Send prayers.”

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### Campus Worship Opportunities

**Sunday**
- **Quaker Meeting**—10:30 a.m., Center for Spiritual Life.
- **InFaith** [JF] — Campus Protestant Worship, 3 p.m., Sydnor Performance Hall, resumes on March 22 in Sydnor Performance Hall with James Coleman ’16 preaching.
- **Roman Catholic Mass**—4:30 p.m., Snidow Chapel. Mass resumes March 22nd.

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### Regularly Scheduled Meetings

- **Spring Break**
- **Lenten Devotions**
- **Christian Ministry**