Alumna Miranda Baker and our two current Jewish students, Emile Vogel-Nakamura and Ryan Geller hosted our third annual Passover Seder – a celebration of God's historical and ongoing work of liberation on behalf of the oppressed. While Emile and Ryan brushed up on their Hebrew prayers, student Emil Yim, who in another life was a red seal chef, once again prepared an amazing four course meal. Manischewitz (kosher for Passover wine) was had by all.

Students toboggan over the dock onto Sylvan Lake at the Winter Retreat.

Farewell from Geordie

Just about a year ago when I moved back to Camrose for the summer I got a text out of the blue from Craig, inviting me over to dinner. That text led to an unexpected, yet excellent year as the interim assistant for chaplaincy. After completing my degree at Augustana and a year at Capernwray Hall Bible School, I do not think it was a coincidence that I was given this opportunity. This job has been an excellent transition for me from being a student to being employed full time. Craig has a contagious positivity with the joy of Christ that I will certainly miss having in the workplace. I enjoyed getting to know the student chaplains, both new and familiar faces. I have also enjoyed working with the Augustana staff, other students, the chaplaincy council, and community members. Often I would forget I was working while talking to students or setting up for soup supper. I have learned that I definitely like working with people which I will take with me in my next job. In the fall I will be a student recruiter for Augustana driving all around the province visiting high schools to talk about Augustana.

Trying to figure out what God wants you to do with your life is a common challenge for young adults. Former Camp Kuriakos Assistant Director, Laureen Wray, led nearly sixty people who attended the 2017 Winter Retreat on a discussion on how we can follow God's will in our lives, even when we are not quite sure what God is calling us to do. Laureen was a very animated speaker who led us through characteristics of God (joyful, loving, truthful, holy, good, just, faithful, and generous) and how we are called to reflect these characteristics in our actions.

The annual Winter Retreat is a time for students to fellowship together with other Christian students from several other university campuses at Camp Kuriakos on Sylvan Lake. There was a time for worship, free time (see photo of Extreme Tobogganing), and our coveted traditions of Friday sushi making, banquet, and talent show.
Training Musicians for Worship

Christian worshippers understand well how a skilled and sensitive musician can enhance a congregation’s ability to worship. With the encouragement of Dr. Milton Schlosser, Mary-Anne Baldwin, second year bachelor of music, piano major, from Vegreville enrolled in the Service Playing Course. The Service Playing course is unique to Augustana in that the student receives instruction from a music professor to provide leadership in Chapel worship. Mary-Anne served on Chaplaincy’s worship planning team, helping to craft worship and select songs which she would then explore in her weekly lesson with Dr. Schlosser. Dr. Schlosser and Mary-Anne also took leadership in organizing cantors and other musicians for worship. As Dr. Schlosser has a passion for the liturgical arts, he was eager to instruct Mary-Anne and pass on his knowledge (Dr. Schlosser also reported learning some new things about contemporary praise and worship music from Mary-Anne). Mary-Anne hopes to continue her education with a bachelor of education to become a music teacher.

Goodness is Stronger than Evil

Each year for our What’s Cookin’ Soup Supper fundraiser we transform the chapel space into a banquet hall and the Faith and Life lounge into “the most unique silent auction in town.” Our silent auction featured home-baked goods, knitting, and artwork as well as experiential items such as a house concert, and an earth oven pizza party (hosted by Pastor Craig himself).

This year we continued with our annual theme of LOVE > HATE (> being the math symbol for is greater than) with larger banners of the lyrics from Desmond Tutu’s hymn Goodness is Stronger than Evil. Our guest speaker was retiring English professor, Dr. Paul Harland, and our pianist Dr. Milton Schlosser. Paul spoke beautifully on our theme and his experiences over the years working at Augustana. This was especially poignant as he reflected on the growing openness changing attitude at Augustana where he can now be open about being in a committed same sex relationship and be accepted at Augustana.

Afterwards, the student chaplains shared their thoughts on the impact that Chaplaincy has on campus, and what it means to them personally. Surprisingly, as more than half of our student chaplains were gone on a dog sledding course trip in the NWT they shared their thoughts via video.

Thank you to all the community members who generously donated silent auction items and to everyone who was able to be a part of this evening and helped us raise over $9,000 to continue to the work of Chaplaincy. I hope you will consider joining us next year on Sunday March 4, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. for our next What’s Cookin’? Soup Supper.

We have never had such creative cheese platters!

Thanks to Adam Sun, Peter Zhou, and Bob Zhen, students in Augustana’s Bridging Program, who did a Community Service Learning placement with Tuesday night Soup Suppers. Working elbow to elbow preparing for Soup Supper both provided a great opportunity for these students to improve their English skills and it opened whole new vistas to the community in cheese platter arrangement. Chaplaincy helps international students to integrate into the Augustana community and looks for ways to celebrate their gifts. Because of his exposure to Chaplaincy through the Soup Supper CSL placement, Adam Sun will be a Student Chaplain in 2017-2018.