

## From the Editors

The easternmost building of our campus has a satellite dish on the roof. Its direction moves to follow satellites beaming Soviet radio and TV programs to students and researchers in the Russian Institute at Columbia University. In a small space below, USSR-watchers translate both the historic and the trivial moments on Moscow TV.

The westernmost building of our campus has a rooftop "greenhouse" for biology students. Exotic and experimental flora enjoy the sun, often minutely examined and lovingly weeded by student hands.

Between these two stations there is a space for campus ministry. Catholics, Jews, Muslims, and a Tibetan Studies Association join "mainline" and "evangelical" Protestants in regular rounds of worship, study, parties, volunteer service and social advocacy. What these groups do and how they speak may be just as strange and just as academically vital as the classrooms and laboratories to the east and west.

For us Christians, the most comprehensive and specific focus of that strangeness and vitality is the Bible. As a symbol, the Bible marks our unity as Christians, while our interpretations serve to divide if not tribalize. Nevertheless, the first thing we need to say about this best-seller is that it is *ours*. It identifies the Christian communities. Students doing term papers and faculty writing book reviews come to us with their questions. The second thing we recognize is that it is *more than ours*. From classrooms to fraternities, from academic conferences to student newspapers, the Bible is used and abused. If campus ministry has any *sine qua non*, anything which serves as an essential tool, it is the gifts we share in the scriptures. It is the flora of our "biology," the foreign broadcast in our world, the strangest of texts that require translation, interpretation and celebration.

That is why the co-editors of this journal for professional campus ministers quickly decided on the theme, "The Bible in the Practice of Campus Ministry." Baptists and Lutherans are frequently in tension when it comes to specific readings. But the significance of the actual texts and stories — apart from "general principles" and faddish debates about relevance — has joined these traditions in a common enterprise. We can sit beside each other to hear the same broadcast and weed from

the same plant boxes, arguing, singing and listening as the work proceeds. We have asked our authors to be practical and to listen to their student and faculty constituencies as they wrote. We hope these contributions are helpful in your ministry, and we suggest that some of these articles may stimulate colleague conversations. Wonder of wonders, they may stir a common commitment to the Lord of Scripture and the mission of the Church.

Albert R. Ahlstrom  
Lutheran Campus Pastor  
Columbia University, New York City

"Amen!" is all this Southern Baptist needs to add to Al Ahlstrom's introduction, but permit me to say a word of thanks to a few of our contributors. Alan Neely produced a very helpful response to David Roland's questionnaire and did it in a hurry. We owe him a favor. We are also indebted to Dr. Neely and to the Case Study Institute for permission to reproduce the case study on the use of the Bible in Namibia. Shuf Davis recruited his Lutheran colleague Jim Bachman and produced a good example of how Lutherans and Baptists can talk together. Tom Lee and Jerry Stevens produced their papers in April and deserve an apology for our tardiness in producing this issue. Barbara Lundblad, known to many readers as a national radio preacher, donated a sermon which originally appeared in the alumni magazine of the Yale Divinity School. Bill Stroup's paper was prepared for the Continuing Education Committee of ASBCM chaired by Charlie Scalise; other papers from that committee will appear in the next issue of *The Campus Minister*.

The figure of Hagar the Horrible is reprinted with the special permission of King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights are reserved. All other illustrations are by Pastor Jerry Fargo of Hunter College in New York City.

I am concluding three years as editor for ASBCM with this issue. I joyously turn the reins (without horses!) over to Bob Hall of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. I must thank all the members of the Publications Committee but particularly Dwight Lyons of Louisville for his diligent work in the printing and mailing of the journal.

Stephen Hollaway  
Baptist Campus Minister  
Columbia University, New York City