

Good Evening,

My name is Jon Enslin, and I have served as a former bishop of the South Central Synod of Wisconsin of the ELCA, located here in Madison, as well as a former head of the Department for Ecumenical Affairs for the ELCA located in Chicago. I am currently retired and a member of Luther Memorial.

I want to make clear that this is not an issue between Episcopalians and Lutherans or the ministry of St. Frances House and the ministry of Luther Memorial. We, in fact, have a commitment to joint ministry, as both of our churches are in "Full Communion" with each other. We want nothing but success for St. Frances House.

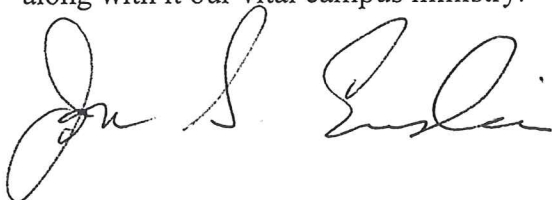
However, it is my fear that the future viability of Luther Memorial is placed at significant risk by a structure of the size being contemplated.

Luther Memorial has been in existence since 1907 and on this site since 1921. It is a strong, vital congregation of approximately 1,000 members, known for excellent worship, a deep concern for the poor and issues of poverty, and strong commitment to ministering to the needs of UW students and faculty. If you come to worship on a Sunday when the University is in session, you may be surprised by the number of students in attendance. The building is often used for concerts and other university functions. It was the place for opening worship during the celebration of St. Augustine, a service that included the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Milwaukee, as well as lecturers from around the world.

Lutheran Campus Ministry is housed in a building next door, owned by Luther Memorial. You may not know that it is the first campus ministry on a campus of a secular university in the United States. Several years ago it celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and averages more than 100 students at worship on Wednesdays, often using Luther Memorial for worship or fellowship, due to spatial needs.

My concern, and the concern of our current bishop (who is out of town), is that this large structure puts the long-term viability of Luther Memorial at great risk. You have already heard of some of the issues and will hear more. A congregation is very fragile when issues of parking, constant building maintenance and logistical difficulty of regular congregational events, such as weddings and funerals, and evening meetings characterize its life. Of all of the active congregations that once existed on University Avenue, Luther Memorial is the only one remaining. The others have disappeared, relocated or become purely campus ministries, which often have struggled, due in part to the lack of a strong congregational base and support.

I believe that you must ask serious questions about the impact of this design on Luther Memorial. We at least need more time to finish our studies, time that we originally thought we were granted. It would not be in the best interest of the community, the university and its student body, for Luther Memorial to be diminished or even closed, and along with it our vital campus ministry.



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