

SKANDALON

VOLUME III

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SPECIAL ISSUE

ECUMENICAL CHURCH SERVICES TO BE HELD AT STATE

On October 7, Skandalon carried an article entitled, "The Church That Is," which attempted to explain to the university community the place of the church in that community. Behind the article lies many days and months of serious consideration on the part of a student-faculty Worship Committee.

We started meeting, to discuss the place of the church in and its meaning for the university, over a year ago. In retrospect, it was an exciting and difficult task. Initially, our objective was to decide if there really existed a place for a church here and, if so, what it would be like and how it could have meaning for the Christian student.

In "The Church That Is," Dr. Colby made an eloquent apology for a church so conceived, and now I want to show what we feel might be a meaningful service of worship.

The endeavor which we have begun is an attempt to unite the various denominations in one service of common worship. We felt if this were to have meaning for thinking students and faculty, who are interested, it must make some honest attempts to leave the existing incongruities, platitudes, and well-meaning but empty talk behind. We had to take some bold yet well considered moves. The committee met always with an unstated current of compromise and consideration, for, while our faith in God is ultimate, our manner of worship is always a very personal and treasured thing. We have hoped that the Christians in the university as a whole will come with the same spirit of adventure and willingness to consider and accept new things.

It is hoped that students and faculty will be willing to take on some of the weekly planning and execution of the service. In a nutshell, while we hope the church will be meaningful for the university community, it must be the students and faculty who bring meaning to the church.

We have proposed on these hopes a name - The Church of the University Community. It is, as everything else that follows, subject to modification and change. An order of service has also been proposed. It was compiled after much deliberation.

The service will begin at 8:30 a.m. with a Service of Holy Communion for Episcopalians. Canon Edward Williams, assigned to the Committee by the Episcopal Bishop of Albany, will preside over this part of the service. At 9:00 a.m., a hymn will serve as a transition to the Ministry of the Word. At this time, the other worshippers will enter. The Ministry of the Word will begin with a greeting and a prayer, a reading from the Old Testament, a reading from the New Testament, and the sermon, followed by a hymn of response, announcements, prayers for church and world, and a short grace (said by all). Then a hymn will serve as a transition to the Ministry of the Lord's Supper, at which time Episcopalians (and any others who desire to do so) may leave.

There are many things as yet undecided. One of the things we have determined is to be flexible, for in flexibility lies one of the keys to success. If you are interested in participating in the service, we invite you to be with us Sunday, October 25, at United-Fourth Presbyterian Church, 916 Western Avenue, midway between the old and new dorms. A special bus will leave Sayles at 8:00 a.m. and 8:40 a.m., stopping at the State Campus Cafeteria at 8:15 a.m. and 8:55 a.m. to pick up those who come there for breakfast.

We believe our university people are anxious to belong to and express themselves in a vital church. This movement is an opportunity to find out a way to a more meaningful way to worship God in a closer bond with fellow Christians.

-Elizabeth Honnet Webre-
