Church Together

CAMPUS MINISTRY CONGREGATION FINDS NEW WAY TO HELP STUDENTS

University Lutheran Church (UniLu) is a campus ministry congregation of the ELCA, founded in the 1960s to be a ministry to the community gathered around Stanford University in Palo Alto. A small congregation, UniLu is deeply committed to issues of justice, spiritual formation, leadership development for students, and fostering a community of faith for those engaged in the university setting.

Earlier this year, as the COVID-19 pandemic forced students into part or full-time remote learning, UniLu members became aware that some students, elementary through college, were trying to do their studies from a couch or on the floor because they had no desk. Congregation leaders decided they had the gifts to help meet this need, and set to work on a desk building project.

Pastor Greg Schaefer is a woodworker; he purchases lumber and other supplies needed to prepare desk kits. Greg cuts, drills, and labels boards. Others then come to UniLu and assemble and sand the desks. Finishing the desks is left up to the recipients so they can make the desks their own; they seem to enjoy that opportunity. Others take responsibility for delivery, and still others for underwriting the cost of the project. So far the ministry has spent $2,000 on lumber, drill, sander, screws, sandpaper, and some mileage, and produced 52 desks. The project has been funded mostly by individual donors, with some funds from Thrivent.

As the desk building project has grown, word is spreading fast and people are coming from many parts of the community to participate. UniLu gladly welcomes these new partners. And some
students, instead of engaging in classes and individual studies on floors and couches, are working at large, well built desks that will last a long time – a visible reminder of a surprise and welcome gift.

By Carl Wilfrid

Do you have a story that you would like to share? Send any Church Together story requests to mic@spselca.org.