



**UKirk at Ole Miss
Mission Statement**

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UKirk at Ole Miss is a student faith community of the Presbyterian Church (USA) serving the students of the University of Mississippi, commonly known as Ole Miss. The name “UKirk” is an abbreviation of “University Church” (Kirk is an old scots-english word for “church”). UKirk is a partnership ministry between the Presbytery of St. Andrew and First Presbyterian Church of Oxford, MS, and is a member of UKirk Ministries, the Presbyterian Church (USA)’s national network of collegiate ministries.

UKirk at Ole Miss is a community of students bound together in faith, looking together to Jesus Christ so that we might come to know something about who we are and who God is. Our mission is to both proclaim and live out the good news of Jesus Christ on the Ole Miss campus through worship, service, learning and fellowship.

UKirk at Ole Miss’ Approach to Ministry

Our ministry should be by Presbyterians, but not simply for Presbyterians. While we want to be sure we serve our Presbyterian students and minister from the perspective of the Reformed tradition, our community should be accessible, inviting and open to students of any faith background or conviction.

Our ministry should articulate a clear understanding of the Christian faith. Too often, young people of faith define their faith negatively. It’s easier for us to say what we don’t believe than what we do believe, easier to say what we are not than it is to say what we are. Our ministry ought to provide students with the ability to clearly articulate what our reformed christian faith is about, and not negatively define ourselves against other perspectives.

Our ministry should allow space for questioning the Christian faith. While it’s important for us to clearly articulate our faith, young people who are given room to wrestle with their faith are far more likely to become committed to their faith down the road. To put it another way, it is only

through questioning that our faith becomes our own, and not someone else's. Our ministry and community should make room for questioning, mystery and uncertainty.

Our ministry should invite students into a sense of ownership over their faith. It's important that our ministry not be something that the church does for college students, but rather something that college students do together *with* the church, as part of the church. It's important that students be given ownership over the ministry and therefore over their faith. Our ministry ought to be shaped by their needs, their ideas, their questions and their convictions.

Our ministry to create in our students a sense of identity in larger church. Our intention should not be to create a separate space for college students to live out their faith, but rather create a space that connects our college students to the larger church. For some, this means creating connections that have not been their before to unfamiliar congregations and ideas. For others, it means nurturing long standing connections.

Spiritual Themes for College Ministry

UKirk at Ole Miss is a student faith community of the Presbyterian Church (USA), and as such seeks to practice Christian faith as understood by the reformed tradition. As Presbyterians, we say our theology is found in the good news of Jesus Christ, as witnessed to in Scripture, as understood in the [Confessions of the reformed tradition](#).

In accordance with the Reformed Tradition UKirk's mission statement says:

UKirk at Ole Miss is a community of students bound together in faith, looking together to Jesus Christ so that we might come to know something about who we are and who God is.

To this end, UKirk of Ole Miss strives to be an Incarnational Ministry. Jesus Christ is both fully and truly God and fully and truly human. That means that by looking to Jesus— how he lived his life, what he said, what he taught, what he valued and cared about, and even how he died— we might come to know something about both who God truly is, and about who we truly are. Just as God's love was embodied in Jesus Christ, together we seek to embody God's love in the world.

In looking to Jesus Christ, UKirk identifies the following five spiritual themes that guide our ministry together. These themes are not meant to be exhaustive, nor are they meant to be essentials. Rather these themes are aimed at giving direction, clarity and focus to UKirk's ministry.

Divine Sovereignty: The world belongs to God, not to us, nor to anything or anyone else. All things are from God, through God, and for God; and therefore God gets the last word in all things. God alone, then, is worthy of our devotion; and everything we do ought to be for God's glory.

UKirk's ministry hopes to challenge students to put God first in their lives among the our many worldly distractions, and find hope by trusting that God is ultimately in control.

Human Imperfection: Everyone sins and falls short of God's glory. None of us are perfect, none of us have all the answers, none of us can make it on our own, and we all make mistakes. We all, in our own way, have rejected God.

UKirk's ministry hopes to challenge students to confront and confess their own sinfulness, shortcomings, misgivings, imperfections and failures, and recognize their need for God and their need for one another.

Reconciling Love: In Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, we see the God's reconciling love for us is so much deeper and greater than our sinful rejection of God. In Christ, God has reconciled himself to us, so that we might be reconciled to one another.

UKirk's ministry hopes to challenge students to seek reconciliation to one another in love, and to promote reconciliation throughout the world, working for justice and equality; and serving those who are suffering and in need.

Spiritual Vocation: Everyone has something to offer the world. Human beings are made in the image of God, and God has given each of us gifts and talents to be used to God's glory and offered to the world.

UKirk's ministry hopes to challenge students identify and claim their unique gifts and talents, to honor and value the God-given gifts of all students and believers, and to empower students to use their gifts and talents to God's glory in the world.

Covenant Community: God gives us one another. Because we are imperfect, we need each other's gifts and talents, and when we come together God makes our gifts and talents stronger. In Jesus Christ God binds us together, and uses our gifts to bring about reconciliation in the world.

UKirk's ministry hopes to challenge students to involve themselves in community, to identify our need for one another, and to grow with each other and to learn from one another as they seek to serve God together.